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ABSTRACT

The 13 papers collected in this volume illustrate the issues that currently interest educational researchers in Ireland. Seamus O. Suilleabhain explores education as a profession and the concept of professional identity. Papers written by Jim McKernan, Diarmuid Leonard, and Luke Murtagh examine curriculum research and development as a professional activity. Susan Parkes and Ann FitzGibbon introduce autobiography as a methodology for illuminating professional concerns in pre-service teacher education programs. Three papers, written by Declan Irvine, Yvonne O'Reilly, and Kevin Williams and Gerry McNamara, focus on concerns about inservice education and the coherence of youth education programs. An experimental teaching supervision program is considered by Maire Ui Chathain, while papers by Mary Meany and Maire O Murehada describe various aspects of music education curricula. Anthony Motherway stresses the role and status of textbooks in teaching history and English, and John McMahon considers broadcast-based teaching as a concept in open learning systems. (JHP)

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VOL 6 No. 1 1986-1987

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General Editor's Comment[1]

The papers in this volume continue to illustrate the broad range of issues which have captured the curiosity and imagination of educational researchers in Ireland. Whilst no one theme can be identified as an organizing feature, readers ought to be aware of the growing interest in issues concerning practical matters such as curriculum and examinations, curriculum development projects, provision of inservice education and training, action research as well as the more traditional foundation areas of philosophy, history and sociology of education - all of which seek to increase the professionalism of practitioners.

Educational Studies took a first, but not hesitant step, towards professional status in Ireland at University College Galway in 1976 when Rev. Professor Eustas O hEideain, O.P. and Dr. John Marshall of the Education Department there organized the first meeting of the Association. The Association has gone from strength to strength with the number of members and papers delivered multiplying at a geometric rate. Despite these facts, education as a profession, if indeed it is a profession, is marked by great disunity, hierarchical divisions, divergence of practice and procedure, and, perhaps, most significantly, a noticeable lack of political influence than other professions. Why is educational research not considered a priority area for policymakers? Why are so little resources devoted to research activities? Why indeed, has there not developed a closer relationship between government and educational research? Educational policy ought to be grounded in immaculate research data. In the planning of teacher education, and here the Carysfort case springs to mind, a closer relationship between researchers and policymakers together with meticulous monitoring of variables such as teacher supply may have circumvented the present crisis, or at least, minimised the problem. Indeed, professional scrutiny and planning based upon sound data may yet resolve the problem. My point is that there must be an authentic and truly collaborative union between research and policy. Government must appreciate that educational research can be directed at practical and pressing problems with a view to solving these. The solutions must lead to improved practice and professionalism. This action research approach has recently been re-discovered in curriculum research and is one example of how this partnership of practitioners, researchers and policymakers can work.

Government must more adequately fund educational research. The payoff would be enormous. Most studies reported in this journal are undertaken in a private capacity with personal resources. The scope and scale of such inquiry is severely limited due to financial and other resource-based constraints.

My final point is directed at educational researchers. Educational researchers also have responsibilities. Not only should they select pressing problems as the subject of enquiry but they must have the conviction to stand behind their findings. At a time when Health Education and Education for Living curriculum programmes have been subjected to continuous attack in the media by right-wing reactionary elements, scholars and researchers in education have been virtually silent on the issue of 'lifeskills' for pupils. Do not educational researchers have an informed and scholarly response to this issue? Or shall we allow the 'hijacking' of curriculum innovation to take place before our eyes? Researchers need to communicate these views to constituent groups other than their research colleagues. The existence of this journal endeavours to meet this aim. Similar points were made in my editorial in 1983 in outlining the dual responsibilities of researchers and policy makers. One lives in hope.

Volume 6 contains twenty-seven papers in two numbers. The first number contains thirteen papers. It gives great satisfaction to publish Rev. Professor Séamus Ó Súilleabhain's Presidential Address, delivered in Galway last spring. Professor Ó Súilleabhain continued his exploration of the theme of education as a profession by focussing on the concept of one's professional identity as an educator which promotes education as a discipline in its own right. Freed from the 'mesh' and undifferentiated 'much' of yesteryear education may yet count as a discipline.

Papers by McKernan, Leonard and Murtagh examine curriculum research and development as a professional activity within an action research perspective.

The paper by Parkes and FitzGibbon breaks new ground by introducing the notion of autobiography as a methodology for illuminating professional concerns in teacher education at pre-service level.

Papers by Irvine, O'Reilly, Williams and McNamara explore the vital concern for inservice education and training and the coherence of education and training in youth programmes.

An experimental programme in supervision of teaching practice is discussed in Ui Chathain, while Meaney and Murchada deal with aspects of music education in curriculum.

Volume 6 is dedicated to the memory of our dear departed friend and colleague, Rev. Professor Seamus O Suilleabhain, whose professional presence lingers among us.

Jim McKernan
General Editor,
Education Department,
University College Dublin.
February 1987

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[1] The views expressed are those of the Editor and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Editorial Board, Executive Committee or the E.S.A.I. in general.

APPRECIATION OF
REV. PROFESSOR SÉAMUS Ó SÚILLEABHAIN

As the academic year of 1986-87 got under way, with all its bustle and activity, there was one major figure missing from the field of Educational Studies. Rev. Prof. Séamus Ó Súilleabhain, late Professor of Education at Maynooth was no longer with us, and he was sorely missed. Taken ill as he corrected examination scripts in early June, his death followed suddenly and unexpectedly. It was hard to accept that this gentle giant, a major educationist in Ireland over recent decades, was no more. The deep sadness and sense of loss which pervaded the hugh congregations of friends and educationists from all over Ireland who attended the funeral ceremonies were palpable. He was laid to rest in the quiet community cemetary of his Christian Brother Congregation in Marino.

Brother Séamus was actually born in New York, but at an early age was brought to Doonbeg, Co. Clare, for which he retained an abiding affection. Having joined the Christian Brothers he underwent his teacher training courses in Marino and Strawberry Hill College, London. He taught in schools in Roscommon and in the dockyards of Belfast. He loved to retell anecdotes of his teaching experiences, reflecting the great interest he took in the antics and foibles of school pupils.

Séamus was a man of very high intellectual gifts. Among the postgraduate qualifications which he was awarded following studies in The Queen's University, Belfast, and U.C.D. were a Master's Degree in Education, a Master's Degree in Psychological Science and his doctorate in Educational Psychology. His depth of thinking on educational issues and his energetic involvement were quickly recognised. He returned to St. Mary's College of Education, Marino, in 1961 as Head of Education. Then in the context of new thinking and expansionary plans for Maynooth College in the mid-sixties, Brother Séamus was appointed Professor of Education there in 1966. It was an expansionary time in education generally and Séamus threw himself into his new role with characteristic commitment and energy. He greatly expanded the role of the Education Department in Maynooth. He led the way in opening a new chapter in Maynooth's story by inviting women students to participate in the Higher Diploma in Education. He opened up facilities for the Higher Diploma and for Masters' Studies in Education to an appreciative pool of students throughout the midlands. As well as the myriad of tasks, teaching, supervision, correction, administration to which he devoted himself over the years, Professor Ó Súilleabhain also kept his interests very alive in research and the academic study of education.

He developed the Marino Reading Attainment Tests which have been widely used as an important diagnostic tool in reading attainment and in the ascertaining of reading difficulties among pupils. He was generous with his time in contributing to educational conferences and seminars, frequently adopting a fresh, courageous approach to the themes in question. The vigour of his thought coupled with his commanding presence ensured that his contributions made an impact. The passing years saw no dimunition of his interest in educational research and of his concern to promote informed educational debate and reform. He took a leading part in the work of the

Educational Studies Association of Ireland. Just two months before he died he had completed a four-year period as Vice President and President of the Association. He presented many significant papers to the ESAI and was most concerned to foster and encourage young teachers and researchers to have high standards of professionalism in their work.

Professor Ó Súilleabhain loved to keep in touch with the practical work of the classroom and was a frequent and welcome visitor to many schools in the Leinster region. In recent years he strongly supported the case for curriculum reform in post-primary schools, activated by a deep concern for the personal well-being of young people in today's complex and changing society.

Séamus carried his learning lightly. He exuded a warm, genial personality with a fine sense of humour and dignified courtesy. He loved the outdoors and particularly enjoyed long country walks and swimming, especially among the Atlantic breakers. Bhí grá mór aige don teanga Gaelach agus do traidisiún na nadaoine.

Professor Ó Súilleabhain was an educationist of great integrity and vision. His whole-hearted commitment to education was inspiring, his love of teaching infectious, and his concern for the welfare of the young deeply impressive. We mourn his passing but are consoled that his wide-ranging influence will continue to benefit Irish education. The seeds he sowed will continue to bear fruit a hundredfold. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam caoin.

Dr. John Coolahan
Education Department
University College Dublin

Irish Educational Studies, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1986

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 1986

TOWARDS OUR PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Rev. Professor Séamus V. Ó Súilleabhain

May I begin on a personal note. When I first qualified as a teacher I accepted the system in which I found myself. Within that framework I followed the syllabus, wrote lesson notes and presented these to the principal every week, used the methods advocated, and tried to work towards a good rating from the inspectors.

Later I began to study, in greater detail, the system in which I worked, its history, the purpose of education, how children learn, what was happening in other countries and so forth. Such studies resulted in fine sounding essay titles such as "Being or Becoming : the True Nature of Education" or "Traditional versus Progressive Forces in Education".

Later again I took up specialised studies within the field of psychology, of history, of psychometrics but I still remained in mind conditioned by where I was. I was quite happily locked within the space capsule of education. Ground control was in charge but I did not realise that.

Various circumstances brought me into teacher education and I beavered away there but now contact with young teachers and watching the work in schools I saw myself for the first time, and indeed very late in life, as something akin to a man from outer space. I had passed out of the orbit of ground control. I felt somewhat outside the system looking in and this being so - however subjective all this may sound - I began to ask some five years ago: "What are educational studies?" This was followed up by my own attempts to answer my own questioning. I considered our disregard of imagination; I felt there were important implications in the recent research on the two halves of the brain; I had become unhappy with our too ready uncritical acceptance of assumptions about the aims of education. More recently, the whole concept of success and failure in our system has brought me face to face with what we are about and with what we ought to be about. These questions concern the very nature of our profession and our freedom of professional action.

The setting up of the Curriculum and Examinations Board provides a new stimulus to look again at our role as professional educators. And so with your indulgence may I now use the occasion of the Presidential Address to put my thoughts before you.

We are within sight of the year 2000. Our pupils, if not ourselves, will be playing a variety of roles in the opening decades of the next millenium. How ready are we and they to address ourselves to the future? Up to the present, mankind has achieved much in art and culture, in democracy, in technology, in improved human conditions, in personal freedom. Serious problems still remain in our global village in the widespread use of violence, in the area of unemployment, in the abuse of natural resources, in the growing signs of social sickness, in confusion over values, even in the threat of annihilation.

Somewhat closer to our own professional concerns, but not unrelated to the general picture, we are in the midst of a debate about the future shape of education.

We note concern about the nature of the curriculum, about assessment, about proposed new structures, about the needs of our pupils, about the relevance of it all.

Reflecting on some of these topics brought me to ask what is really of the essence of education? Is there something there which is independent of particular cultures? Or is it all relative to a historical moment? The immediate context for such reflections happened to be the recent famines in Ethiopia and in Sudan. I asked myself what essentially must belong to education, whether in Ethiopia, Korea, Canada, Hungary or Ireland? I feel that this is an important question if we are to bring clear minds to our own context, alert to, and aware of, our present value judgements about the system, based as these are on historical developments or personal experience. I am not in any sense denying the importance of historical developments or personal experience. They are part of what we are

> . . . society shapes us by acting on our intelligence through culture and language and this in a very subtle, intimate and hidden way. It inculcates in us ideas and all kinds of prejudices which we absorb almost unconsciously. 1

So the fundamental question appears to be: What belongs to the essence of education in all ages, in all places, for all peoples? This brings in the notion of "absolute" as distinct from "relative", the universal as distinct from the unique or specific. While pondering this question, I turned to other disciplines and posed a similar question. It appeared to me, for example, that the essence of law is the promotion of justice and the common good through respect for people's rights, whether as individuals or as communities; that the essence of medicine is the preservation of life and the promotion of health; that the essence of theology (in the religious sense) is intelligent faith seeking an understanding of ultimate reality and one's relationship with it. One very significant aspect of these disciplines is their autonomy, and internal professional freedom. In a somewhat similar vein, I consider that the essence of education is becoming, the gradual discovery of what it means to be human, the search for a personal identity, an identity which brings individual autonomy within a community structure.

Education has always been concerned with people of all ages but especially with the young. On the other hand, education has not always been so sharply aware, nor so clearly concerned, with the promotion of this kind of development of persons. Other aspects and concerns have taken priority. As all peoples in all ages and in all cultures share a common humanity, the one dominant universal appears to be the search for, and the real meaning of, human identity. How we become not only what we are but what we must be. It is within this concept that the real autonomy of the discipline of education lies and it is in its understanding of this concept that the autonomy of teachers takes its origin and gives to teachers their internal professional freedom. But in practice the work of teachers is conditioned and circumscribed by other factors such as political ideologies, cultural contexts, historical and structural developments, economic forces and so forth. One may well ask: Does the exercise and influence of these factors critically prejudice the autonomy of our discipline and the exercise of what should be our own internal professional freedom? I think this is so and this is a situation that needs to be addressed.

The child has life but that life is lived within a human community of family, of neighbourhood, and of the larger society. These three represent rippling circles spreading from the centre outward. They also stand for a variety of cultural patterns given expression through language usage, through behaviour, through value systems. In a simpler world, these rippling circles would share a degree of harmony and uniformity in these matters not so easily found in our complex more apparently pluralistic-type world. The simpler type of society presented or presents one type of model for the achievement of full human stature; our world presents a number. One must avoid the temptation of selecting in advance any one model or of limiting the attainment of full human stature to one specific set of conditions. Full human stature has been achieved under the most appalling conditions of prison, degradation, illness, and indeed missed under what would appear to be very advantageous conditions.

The work of the school and of the teacher may indeed be helped by structures and organizational machinery, but that in itself will not achieve what we hope for. Therefore, we speak about the developing contact of human persons leading towards a greater sense of personal identity through a dawning awareness of who I am, where I belong, where I came from and what may lie ahead.

If, in the broad sense of education, we regard the concept of becoming as the essence of education, it is easy enough to regard this idea as a universal or absolute because of its inevitability. The consensus may be fragmented by asking "becoming what?" For very many the answer would be becoming a fully human person, however that may be defined. The reason lying behind this search for human identity is, I think, a twofold one. One reason is that life itself inexorably moves on. There is always movement and change. What it means to be human is an evolving process aided by personal reflection and sensitive guidance. Choices must be made, decisions taken, followed by reflection and the emergence of the next challenge.

The scholastic principle *operatio sequitur esse* implies that function follows being or essence and so, a key question revolves around our understanding of what this *esse* is, of what human nature is and the search for its significance. There is a healthy tension between what we are and what we might be and it is within this context that our second reason emerges.

The second reason is that life itself for the rational man, poses its own questions. The renowned Viennese psychiatrist and philosopher Viktor Frankl has argued that "Life is to be responded to rather than questioned" and further that man "can answer to life only by answering for his life".[2] Life, therefore, demands some understanding of its nature, purpose, needs and destiny.

Down through history quite a variety of answers have been given to these questions. You are all familiar with some of these answers. In Western culture we have the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Hegel, Marx, Freud, to mention but a few. Historians, religious leaders, political figures and others have also given us their ideas. No doubt you have your own answers, either influenced by others or freely arrived at.

One contemporary answer runs as follows:

> With his unique destiny each man stands, so to speak, alone in the entire cosmos. His destiny will not recur. No one else has the same potentialities as he, nor will he be given them again. The opportunities that can come his way for the actualization of creative or experiential values . . . all these are unique and singular. [3]

A note is being sounded here with which we are familiar - "actualisation or creative or experiential values". This is in keeping with my earlier reflection on the essence of education and by extension in keeping with our internal professional freedom. Real professional practice may make this happen when a child discovers the magic of numbers or the magic of literature, or a heightened enjoyment in drama or begins to understand the complex world of peoples who speak another language or who relives in imagination another clime or period, or who builds up through reason and experience a set of values about himself, others and the world around. But unfortunately how free are we to make this happen? Is our internal professional freedom hampered by those extraneous factors which, to say the least, hamper the autonomy of our discipline or, at worst, are actually hostile towards our professional freedom.

These unique creative values will only emerge if the atmosphere is right - an atmosphere of supportive trust and mutual enthusiasm. This is the area of what I called in a paper published recently, "The Nature of Discipleship". The joy of a dawning personal identity within a widening horizon of meaning is what the process of education is.

One's identity is, of course, bounded by one's unique personality but for convenience we often speak of a component which is given (heredity) and a component which is experienced (environment). There is no dichotomy here. This human life as lived down through the centuries bears witness to certain consequences which seem to flow from it. These may be referred to as 'rights' which are universally conceded in free societies. These 'rights' are the consequence of life and follow from what it means to be human. So they are central to our work in education. They represent a type of foundation. Let me list a few of these rights with their consequences.

RIGHT	CONSEQUENCES	IGNORED
to life	nourishment, health protection, new life	illness, pain death
to respect	dignity, tolerance, sympathy, support	ill-treatment, degradation, despised
to fellowship	communion with others	cast-off, rejected
to belong	sense of place, history, tradition	out-cast, no roots
to achieve	status, skills, happiness	failure, inability to cope, injustice
to express	language, symbols, common understanding	isolation, loneliness
to worship	belief(s), freedom	coercion, injustice

If we look closely at these rights we will notice the ways in which they have been given expression by men, ways which are very basic in any curriculum programme devised with a view to promoting our professional autonomy.

The ways that men have organized their lives and the ways through which they have striven for meaningfulness in their lives may be succinctly summed up by the forms (and their associated concepts) as given here. It would appear reasonable to suggest that within the area of formal schooling some harmony and balance among these modes of human expression be worked out to provide the young with a variety of experiences linked to these basic forms of human expression. The remaking of curriculum

EXPRESSION	FORMS	CHARACTERISTIC
Life	cultivation, industry trade	economic physical
Family	social units	social
Language	poetry, prose, stories, literature	symbolic expressive
Religion	beliefs, worship	spiritual
Government	authority, structure, laws	political
Music	song, dance	aesthetic
Art	painting, sculpture, artifacts	aesthetic
Civilization	organized life, culture	cultural, historical
Understanding	philosophy, science, theology	philosophical, intellectual

is a task for professional judgement taking account of relevant external factors.

In the actual reality of the world we live in, these rights and their expression - both listed above within something akin to a universal context - exist within a given concrete specific context in each tribe, race, region or country. It is this specific context which gives education in any country its shape, defines its purpose, and establishes its structures. This context, purpose, shape, and structure seldom acknowledge and generally curtail the autonomy of our professional discipline. Neither do they advance the internal professional freedom which an autonomous discipline demands. There are, of course, other forces also acting upon law, upon medicine, upon theology but, in those situations, professional judgements are given from within a free autonomous discipline. Educational judgements are often not so free, being subject to non-educational pressures either from within or from without the system.

For instance a demand from economic forces for persons with higher quality technological skills puts pressure on the professional teacher to move in directions which might likely run counter to his/her professional freedom to exercise educational judgement in the case of individual pupils. One may also note the equally strong pressure for a particular academic menu, only suited to a minority, the full implementation of which also runs counter to professional freedom. Examples could indeed be multiplied easily.

At this juncture let it be clearly noted that education is wider than schooling and that the search for identity, the sense of meaningfulness in our lives, must also be addressed in the broader context of the range of cultural idioms present in any society, whether these are religious, scientific, literary, historical, economic or political. The formal system of education is located within this milieu and, while it cannot ignore it, professional freedom indicates that we base our judgements on the autonomous nature of our discipline and, secondly, use that base to inform society how best to harmonise these various idioms within a social framework which gives full support to a fuller appreciation of what it means to be human. This is a not insignificant programme, but it may point the way towards education influencing society rather than the other way round.

Education is concerned with the 'me'. There is only one 'me' and that 'me' has to attain a harmonious inner vision built around recognition, attainment, acceptance, understanding, meaningfulness which links my humanity with that of others. It is the function of education, in the formal sense, to provide the experiences, the guidance, the structures, which would allow this gradual movement towards this "inner vision" which would act as a stabilising central dynamic for the emerging personality.

Taking this as given and then looking at the actual work in our schools, the detached observer from outer space would surely remark some divergence between the full emergence of personality, as outlined, and the programmes and procedures adopted. Many would, and do, explain the divergence by reference to historical developments, to the expanding nature of knowledge, to economic necessity, to the varying needs of a complex society. One cannot deny such forces and cognizance has been taken of this earlier. On closer examination our friendly observer would note that the key emphasis in our formal education system is on certain forms of knowledge and certain types of skill. Even language, great gift that it is, can bring disadvantage in the sense that ready-made forms and systems of concepts may reduce the critical faculties and lead to passive acceptance. The particular emphasis we find largely ignores forms of activity more in keeping with overall development and accessible to the many, in favour of particular modes of activity more acceptable to a bright minority and almost entirely limited to a single dimension of development.

Education as formation has become education as information. Several things follow: We have become captives of our cultural history; what has evolved has been given the status of the permanent. The young person who, by his very nature, should experience delight in the growing development of his powers in the gradual shaping of his personality, in the growing sense of his own identity and worth, finds a very limited programme in the school. For many there is quite a degree of frustration and alienation. Adverse socio-economic conditions outside school coupled with frustration within schools is a dangerous mixture and indeed is robbing youth of its inheritance. This is now a reality for teachers.

There are two questions to be answered: Is change now desirable?; secondly, how may such change be brought about? In my view, change is desirable and even imperative. In this address I have tried to indicate my reasoning for change. The second question concerns the implementation of change. Solutions for complex problems often defy the best efforts of those concerned. On the other hand, awareness and appreciation of a problem may provide the necessary motivation to solve it. Many signs of this awareness are now evident at pupil level, at parent level, at teacher level, and at official level. After awareness comes analysis. Why is there a problem? What has brought it about? May I suggest, among other things, a weakness in our efforts to secure a base for an autonomous discipline of education. From such a base we would be able to be credibly critical rather than vaguely uneasy about decisions, circumstances, and conditions in which we find ourselves. If change is desirable, lack of movement in that direction may be ascribed to current structures and accepted procedures. Allow me to present some examples.

1) Open access for all to second level - in itself a good thing.

2) A commonly shared academic menu.

3) The general influence of third level frontier knowledge, and entry requirements, on second level.

4) The frozen attitude we adopt to subject boundaries.

5) The logical sequential basis of our approach to subject teaching.

6) The rigidity of examination and assessment procedures.

7) An over-emphasis upon one style of knowing.

8) An instrumental curriculum directed mainly towards the economy rather than a liberal curriculum directed towards the individual.

9) The over-generous regard on the part of the public for high grades in national examinations.

10) The use of our schools as society's filter for selection.

11) The social status now given to certain classes of work.

12) The almost sacrosanct character of the status quo.

Changes in some of these areas would free the system from its apparent 'rigor mortis' and provide the opportunity for newer forms of life to appear, forms of life more in keeping with the basic thrust of this address. There are signs of innovative movements and pointers towards change. In summary form, one may note the following:

1) Discussion documents from the Curriculum and Examination Board.

2) A developing climate accepting of some form of continuous assessment - this reduces the importance of national comparison tests.

3) Profiling is receiving greater attention.

4) National Matriculation is being mooted.

5) Modules across subject boundaries are being considered.

6) The slowly emerging work centred on Vocational Preparation and Training Programmes (VPTP).

7) Forms of knowledge, other than cognitive-academic, for example cognitive-practical and cognitive-expressive, are receiving greater attention.

8) Technical and social skills are being promoted as well as cognitive skills.

9) The changing nature of work is being critically looked at. (The Future of Work : Charles Handy.)

10) There is evidence that curriculum should be interpreted in terms of experience as well as content.

11) The increasing development of the new technologies especially information technology.

The implications for teachers and of education departments in universities would emerge gradually. In my view, changes within schools would need to come first. In general, pre-service must cater for what is there. Nevertheless, school staffs, study circles of teachers, those professionally involved in pre-service courses, the various committees of the Curriculum and Examinations Board, other interested groups could do much to begin to shift the balance from what was once the preserve of the privileged few for a specific form of education to suit their purposes towards a more genuine popular movement in education where each child experiences that personal development and sense of worth which is what true education is all about. Such a shift would demand change, resources, goodwill, but would eventually give us a young population with a sense of joy in their personal achievements, would increase our own professional sense of satisfaction and make a school a place of care and not of competition.

Two things follow from this. There must be a continuing search for a base from which to develop education as an autonomous discipline. I can no longer accept the view that it must be an amalgam of other more fundamental disciplines such as philosophy, or psychology, or sociology. If education is to be an autonomous discipline which will give us the right to internal professional freedom, then it must somehow be sui generis something arising out of its very nature.

The other point is that we have grown accustomed to what is; perhaps an element of historical inertia has crept in following from the patterns of thought and action of persons directly involved in the system, for instance departmental policies, management bodies, unions and associations. Perhaps there has been a lack of incisiveness and vision in our educational thinking, a greater concern for quantity, rather than quality. Lastly, to return to the notion of identity, let me ask again what does a person need

- to live as a human being;
- to achieve something;
- to develop a set of values;
- to have the competencies of initiative, of decision-making, of confidence.

Perhaps our Educational Studies Association of Ireland might throw its not inconsiderable weight and prestige behind this case to seek our real professional roots and free ourselves somewhat from the outgrowths of socio-economic factors which for so long have hidden our true professional identity, even from ourselves.

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THE COUNTENANCE OF CURRICULUM ACTION RESEARCH

Jim McKernan

The action research movement offers practitioners a research stance towards their work and is now enjoying a resurgence of interest as practitioners continue to expand their notion of what counts as good curriculum research.

This paper has three objectives: first, to examine and explore the evolution of action research as a scientific enterprise; second, to discuss the 'countenance' or character of contemporary curriculum action research by disclosing and focussing on the key concepts which give substance to the idiom of such inquiry; and finally, to present a practical model of the action research process.

Action Research

One of the movements which has attempted to render the problematic social world understandable as well as to improve the quality of life in social settings has been the 'action research' movement. Action research has been used in industrial, educational, health, and diverse community behavioural settings (see Clark, 1976). Curriculum has no monopoly on action research.

The aim of action research, as opposed to much traditional or fundamental research, is to solve immediate and pressing day-to-day problems of practitioners. Elliott (1981) has defined action research as "the study of social situations with a view to improving the quality of action within it". Action research is carried out on-site and is aimed at conflict resolution, or where participants simply wish to improve their effectiveness. Such enquiry does not have as a primary goal the writing of research reports and other publications.

Action research aims at feeding the practical judgement of actors in problem situations. The validity of the concepts, models and results it generates depends not so much on scientific tests of truth as on their utility in helping participants to act more effectively and intelligently. Theories are not validated independent of practice and then applied to curriculum; but validated through trials and practices. Action research is thus grounded curriculum theory.

One of the most cited definitions is that of Rapoport (1970), "action research aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework". Rapoport sees action research as a special type of applied research which involves participants with problems directly in the search for a solution and also feeds social science with some theoretical pay-off.

I have not yet offered a definition of action research. Before doing so it should be made clear that a curriculum is at base an educational proposal or hypothesis which invites critical response from those who implement it. A curriculum then invites teachers and others to take a research stance; which suggests rigorous examination of one's own practice as the basis for further professional development. Stenhouse (1981) defined research as "systematic self critical inquiry made public". The idea is that each classroom then becomes a laboratory for testing empirically the hypotheses and proposals that are the planned and taught curriculum. Every curriculum practitioner then is a member of the community of educational scientists.

A minimal definition would be:

> action research is the scientific process whereby in a given problem area, or where we simply wish to improve the curriculum, inquiry is carried out first, to specify the curriculum problem; second to specify a plan of action and test hypotheses by applying action to the problem. Evaluation is then undertaken to monitor and establish the effectiveness of the action taken. Finally, participants should reflect on the action to determine what has been learned and communicate this to the community of scholars.

This definition stresses two points: action research is systematic inquiry by employing the scientific method; and second, participants have critical-reflective ownership of the process and its results. (See Figure 2.)

Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Action Research

Action research has developed from a complex web of scientific and social enterprise. A number of writers (Chein, Cook and Harding, 1948; Brown and Tandoon, 1983; Elliott, 1981) suggest that Kurt Lewin was the 'founding father' of action research (Lewin, 1946; 1947a; 1947b) through his work in the Group Dynamics movement of the post-war reconstructionist era. Careful study of the literature shows quite clearly that action research is a root derivative of the 'scientific method'. This paper provides evidence of action research in use by a host of social reformist initiatives prior to the Lewinian conceptualization. Action research is in a stage of development and is in a transient stage.

Today, action research has been influenced by the historical evolution and philosophical flavour of the following:

1) Science in Education Movement of the Nineteenth/ Twentieth Century;
2) Experimentalism and Progressive Educational thought;
3) Group Dynamics Movement in Social Psychology;
4) Post-war 'Corey-Era' Curriculum Development Movement in the U.S.;
5) The 'Teacher As Researcher' Movement in the U.K., U.S.A. and Australia, aided by developments in curriculum evaluation and qualitative research methodology.

Science in Education Movement

The advocation of science in education through employment of the scientific method to solve problems was pursued in the late nineteenth century vigorously by men such as Thorndike, Bain, Boone, Dewey and others. Scientific interest has been provoked by Darwin (1859) and by 1900 numerous scientific associations had begun to affect the character and culture of curriculum and education. In 1879 Bain published *Education As a Science* in which he advocated use of the scientific method. In 1904 Boone argued in his influential *Science of Education*:

> For reliable results there are needed trained observers . . . there is needed a body of earnest teachers who are also students, and

> who are ready to make every day's undertakings an object of fresh, thoughtful, critical direction . . . there is needed a mind in studious or professional problems in an impersonal way; open-minded, as if working in a laboratory. (Boone, 1904, 200.)

Thus the stage was set for seeing the teacher as a researcher, working scientifically in his classroom-laboratory. This image of the teacher as scientist is developed by a number of progressive and reconstructionist educational thinkers.

Perhaps the most influential book promoting the notion of the teacher as an action researcher was that of Buckingham (1926) aptly titled Research For Teachers. In a chapter labelled "The Teacher as Research Worker" Buckingham argued forcefully:

> Teaching and research should be required of faculty members not only in higher educational institutions but also in the public school. (Buckingham, 1926, 379.)

Buckingham argued for scientific testing and the use of statistical-quantitative skills for teachers, but interestingly enough, was not opposed to qualitative inquiry . . .

> Among the many types of research work available to teachers, the making of case studies is by no means unimportant. (Buckingham, 1926, 378.)

George Counts remarked "without doubt the finest educational fruit which the practical sense of the American people has borne is the movement for the scientific study of education" (Encyclopedia of Education, 1971).

Experimentalist-Progressive Philosophy of Education

There was considerable overlap between the science in education movement and the later, progressive period. The links between experimentalism with curriculum research as a scientific process should be underlined. The paramount influence came from Dewey (1910) in his How We Think, in which his scientific, or reflective problem-solving approach is outlined. Dewey applied the scientific method and process as a logic and set of principles of procedure to be followed in such diverse areas as aesthetics, logic, ethics, epistemology, psychology and pedagogy. In Logic : The Theory of Inquiry (1938), Dewey once again argued that there must be a unity of the structure of inquiry in both common sense and science. He promoted logic as a method of scientific thinking and problem resolution (cf. Figure 1).

In 1929 Dewey argued in his The Sources of a Science of Education that a proper role of the teacher was one of investigator of pedagogical problems through inquiry. In a chapter titled "The Teacher As Investigator" (Dewey, 1929) he suggested:

> educational practices provide the data, the subject matter which form the problems of enquiry . . . A constant flow of less formal reports on special school affairs and results is needed . . . it seems to me that the contributions that might come from class-room teachers are a comparatively neglected field; or, to change the metaphor, an almost unworked mine.

Dewey further stated that:

> it is impossible to see how there can be an adequate flow of subject matter to set and control the problems investigators deal with, unless there is active participation on the part of those directly engaged in teaching. (Dewey, 1929, 47-48.)

The progressive era did much to encourage teachers to apply the scientific method of problem-solving to problems of curriculum development. Teacher involvement became more direct in curriculum design after 1930 as a result of two famous American projects: *The Eight Year Study* (Aiken, 1942) and *The Southern Study* (1946). The latter project adopted an action-oriented programme of curriculum renewal through the use of scientific methods.

Group Dynamics Movement

In the mid-1940s, Kurt Lewin discussed action research (Lewin, 1946; 1947a; 1937b) as a form of experimental research based upon the study of groups experiencing social problems. Lewin argued that social problems should serve as the locus of social science research. Basic to Lewin's model is a view of research composed of action cycles including analysis, fact-finding, conceptualization, planning, implementing and evaluation of action. Lewin's contribution is important because, although he was not the first to develop and write about action research, he did construct a general theory and made action inquiry 'respectable' for social scientists. Action research was hailed as an important innovation in social inquiry. Lewin felt strongly that science should have a social-help function and he stated "research that produces nothing but books will not suffice" (Lewin, 1948, 203).

Action research was used in the study of industry (Whyte and Hamilton, 1953) and group dynamics work (see Jaques, 1952; Clark, 1976) and had a strong following in the U.S.A. at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and in England through the work of the Tavistock Institute and many of the action research projects have been discussed in the journal of the Institute, Human Relations.

It is also important to acknowledge Lewin's idea that in order to understand and change certain social practices, social scientists have to include practitioners from the real social world in all phases of inquiry.

En passant, it ought to be noted that a number of writers used the term 'action research' prior to Lewin. Writing in 1946, Lippit and Radke (1946) indicate that at least eight studies had been completed using the action research procedure, mainly under the direction of the U.S. Commission on Community Interrelations during the early 1940s. In a paper read at the 1938 meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, Seltiz and Cook, noted social psychologists, posed the question "Can research in social science be both socially useful and scientifically meaningful?" These psychologists argued that research ought to be conducted with social agencies that have action programmes in the field as this would ensure that problems are of live social concern, and that the results will be immediately useful and applicable in real-life situations (see DuBois, 1950).

Another writer who employed the term action research before Lewin was Collier (1945) who was Commissioner on Indian Affairs in the U.S. concerned to plan social programmes linked with action research findings. He argued:

> Since the findings of research must be carried into effect by the administrator and the layman, and must be

> criticised by them through their experience, the administrator and the layman must themselves participate creatively in the research impelled as it is from their own area of need. (Collier, 1945, 276.)

Post-War 'Corey-Era' Action Research in Curriculum Development

A number of post-war reconstructionist-era writers promoted and championed the use of action research in education (Corey, 1949a; 1949b; 1952; 1953; Wann, 1952; Taba, Brady and Robinson, 1953; Taba and Noel, 1957). Corey was foremost in leading this movement and he believed that action research could significantly change and improve curriculum practice because practitioners would use the results of their own enquiries. Unlike Lewin, Corey did not believe that generalizations could be made from action research projects to other populations (Corey, 1953). Interest was very high during the 1950s to use action research as a general strategy to design curricula and to attack such complex problems as that of intergroup relations through curriculum action research programmes (Taba, Brady and Robinson, 1952; Verduin, 1967; Passow, Miles and Corey, 1955).

This period was also called the era of 'cooperative action research' in that teachers and schools 'cooperated' with outside researchers by making their settings available for research. Towards the end of the 1950s action research declined and was the subject of increased attack (Hodgkinson, 1957). In a telling title "Whatever Happened To Action Research" Sanford (1970) suggested that the decline of action research was directly related to the split between science and practice which was supported by the movement towards concern for the establishment of expert educational research and development laboratories.

Contemporary Curriculum Action Research and Development (C.A.R.D.)

Action research has enjoyed a new rejuvenation as a result of the curriculum landmark studies of the mid-1970s (Berman and McLaughlin, 1975; 1977; Goodlad, 1975; 1984) which suggested that school-focussed problem solving approaches are more likely to succeed than large, federally funded central directives. Lieberman and Miller (1984) argue that in the 1970s action research was re-discovered and renamed Interactive Research and Development on Teaching (IRDT). This interactive, or collaborative research and development perspective has been widely endorsed by Tikunoff, Ward and Griffin (1979) Noto (1984) and Stenhouse (1975; 1979).

The present trend is to involve teachers and other school practitioners with external agents in collaborative projects aimed at solving curriculum problems (Connelly Ben-Peretz, 1980; Elliott, 1977). In addition to helping practitioners acquire research skills, collaborative action research will probably increase the likelihood that teachers will use their own, and learn from others' research findings in their work (see Huling, Trang and Correll, 1981).

Collaborative curriculum action research should enable practitioners to develop a more personal conception and definition of what counts as legitimate curriculum 'research' (Ross, 1984).

Contemporary approaches have stressed the development of teachers' research skills (Stenhouse, 1975; Walker, 1985; Hopkins, 1985; Butzow and Gabel, 1986). In the U.S.A. the National Science Teachers' Association has sent out the call 'every teacher a researcher'.

Teacher - Researcher Movement

The 'teacher-researcher' movement marks a radical departure from the conventional view of curriculum research as a specialist occupation. In Britain, the call came initially from Lawrence Stenhouse and his experimental pedagogical concerns based upon the Humanities Curriculum Project (1967-1972) and his writings (Stenhouse, 1975; 1979). Since 1976, a Classroom Action Research Network has been established under the direction of John Elliott, a former project officer of the Humanities Project and several accounts of action research have appeared (Elliott and Adelman, 1976; Elliott, 1977).

More recent British work (Elliott, 1981; Hopkins, 1985; Walker, 1985) has focussed more precisely on research techniques and methodology for doing action research in naturalistic settings. This thrust recognizes the need to equip practitioners with research skills for conducting inquiry, e.g. interviewing, questionnaires, observation, checklists, and case study are the suggested modes of inquiry. These methods could be classified as simple social science and they continue the portrait of qualitative descriptive approaches advocated in close fidelity with the teacher-researcher ideas of Stenhouse.

Critical Action Research

A radical alternative approach to action research has been developed by Carr and Kemmis (1983) in both philosophical and methodological terms. In a significant philosophical piece, Becoming Critical : Knowledge Through Action Research, the authors eschew a positivist-empirical approach in favour of a critical-interpretive philosophy of social science in doing action research. Carr and Kemmis have sketched this critical action research and its special relationship with educational science and theory. This 'critical' action research is akin to the new, interpretive sociology and adopts the critical approach to understanding in human science as advocated by Habermas and other contemporary critical theorists. At a substantive level this critical action research rejects the positivist belief in the instrumental role of knowledge in problem-solving, arguing that critical inquiry would enable practitioners to search out interpretive meanings that educational actions have for practitioners and that any adequate theory of action research would be grounded in the interpretive categories of practitioners. Like other critical theory, the Carr and Kemmis account gives priority to criticizing those practices and human actions which thwart and distort rational goal achievement. Rather than equipping practitioners with conventional field research techniques and methods, the concern is to develop the discourse and analytical and conceptual skills of teacher-researchers so that they can be 'emancipated' through their collaborative group understanding.

In Australia, significant action research work has been undertaken at Deakin University and has been reported by Kemmis et al. (1982) in The Action Research Reader, and by McTaggart et al. (1982) in The Action Research Planner.

Demands for school accountability, programme and teacher self-evaluation have developed simultaneously with the explosion of knowledge in curriculum evaluation methodology which has moved away from quantitative-psychometric approaches to a more qualitative style of evaluation methodology emphasizing thick description, interpretation and understanding of projects rather than measurement and prediction. Alternatively, there has been a growing number of practitioners taking on a research role in response to accountability demands. This community of discourse has often rejected the psychometric and positivist articulations of research preferring a discourse more commonly shared by practitioners. This community of teacher-researchers has arisen largely due to the failure of traditional curriculum research to address significant problems faced by practitioners. Even when traditional researchers have designed studies focussing on real problems for practitioners, they have served to define the problems being investigated and have used methods and language alien to the teaching force.

Curriculum research, and much educational research in particular, still remains a specialist activity engaged in by professionally trained social scientists who operate outside of curriculum and classrooms for the benefit of those outside the classroom. The new collaborative action research paradigm fosters teacher inquiry and promises a new, dynamic insider-outsider partnership for the mutual benefit of all participants in the project, especially those working inside the classroom.

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The Countenance of Curriculum Action Research

The nature or face of curriculum action research may be disclosed by careful analysis of its many distinguishing features. The purpose of this part of the paper is to offer a sketch, or cameo, of the key concepts which characterize the idiom of this activity. This sketch, of some thirteen key concepts, is not offered as an objective summation of the field of action research as a whole. Rather, they represent what the author advocates as central features of what good curriculum action research ought to be, fully realizing that these features have precedent in other types of action research represented in the literature of the field. As such, this portrait is subjective and selective - some might even say opaque and rough. Yet it aspires to portray authentic action.

1) Concerned with improvement in Quality of Action and Practice

Curriculum action research is undertaken so that practitioners may solve problems and improve their practice and effectiveness as professionals. Moreover, practitioners conduct the research themselves so that they can function more effectively by solving their own curriculum problems. Thus, action research seeks to improve professional practice by enabling participants to work more effectively, reflectively, skilfully and intelligently at problem-solving, thus it aims to improve the 'quality of life' in a social setting.

2) Increase Human Understanding

Action research has as a foremost goal the increase in personal understanding of the curriculum problem to hand in all its various dimensions. Action research is thus a form of critical, or hermeneutical inquiry, in the sense that it focusses on the problem of understanding one's own and others' understanding of a problem. Reflective thinking is a chief activity in the process. In Gadamer's (Gadamer, 1984) view, interpretive understanding is the most central act of being human, and that by engaging in such acts we enhance our own humanness.

3) Focus on Problems of Immediate Concern to Participants

The persons experiencing difficulties are those who engage in the research of problems that are pressing and real in their day-to-day lives. Action research is applied research in that problems are researched as they arise. A chief deficit of traditional curriculum research is that problems are researched with an enormous time lag between the initial inquiry and implementation of research recommendations, if there are any at all. It is vital that problems be selected for inquiry which are seen to be real problems by those experiencing the difficulty and that the participants are involved in the search for a solution. Curriculum action research speeds up the process of finding a solution.

4) Collaborative

Inquiry ought to be collaborative in the sense that all of those with an interest and stake in the problem should be involved in the search for a solution. What this means is that practitioners such as teachers will work jointly alongside external persons such as administrators, evaluators, etc. in defining problems worthy of study, collecting data and writing reports. Collaboration implies an equality principle as well - thus teachers are not seen to be simply 'cooperating' but genuinely sharing as full-fledged participants in the research process. Collaboration also implies the establishment of a professional network of project persons - perhaps teachers with outside administrators and university research workers. Curriculum action research is opposed to the artificial division of labour in research which separates the 'expert researchers' from the 'researched' (Kyle and McCutcheon, 1984).

5) Conducted In-Situ

Inquiry is conducted in the social setting where the curriculum problem is encountered by those who encounter the problem. Action research is therefore 'naturalistic' research since it is carried out in-situ, and it seeks to explain this phenomenological world view held by actors in the setting. Action research is careful then not to change or interfere with this naturalistic setting by controlling subjects or distancing the research from the site. It seeks empirically tested and constructed accounts from those who have defined and faced the problem under investigation.

6) Participatory Research

Action research is dynamic and participatory in the sense that those affected by the problem are the chief researchers and 'users' of the solutions suggested. It also suggests a more active role of experimenting within the setting - that is, the users learn by participating in the process. Participants are not only conscious of seeking solutions in the form of a product, but of increasing their skills of inquiry by becoming committed to the process of research inquiry.

7) Focus on Single Unit, or Case

Action research looks at a single case and not a sample population. Whole populations are studied, e.g. a class, or school, and solutions and predictions are made only for the single group, or case, studied. This means that there is little room to generalize the findings to other populations and generalization in action research is problematic and tenuous. The case study is a chief research method in action research and recognises the idiosyncratic and unique feature of this style of research.

8) No Attempt to Control Setting Variables

Key variables are not isolated and rigorously controlled in action research as in much traditional research. Action research argues that once action steps are taken in the form of experimental hypotheses that the problem being studied will undergo change, as will the subjects affected by that problem. Strict control of key variables thus becomes a nonsense operation. To attempt to control variables would be akin to setting limits on the possibility and diversity of human response and action.

9) Research Problem and Aims May Change as Research Proceeds

Action research, by its very conception, allows the initial problem to change as a result of action steps - thus after initiating action it is a chief task of the participants to monitor and carefully redefine the new face of the curriculum problem as it manifests itself as the result of action. New problems may be thrown up by the search for a solution and new hypotheses suggested.

10) Evaluative-Attempts to Explain Amount of Growth of Participants

It is vital at some stage, preferably near the end of a particular cycle of research, to reflect upon the experience and attempt to explain what has been learned by participants as a result of involvement in the project. Thus, participants carefully reflect upon where they were at the outset by determining the baseline position and what they have learned from implementation of various action steps. It may will prove to be the case that a solution is not forthcoming; nevertheless, one's own and others' understanding and knowledge of the problem will have been altered by the experiment and it is important to chart this with care and document the experience.

11) Methodologically Innovative/Eclectic

Action researchers may have to design new methods or strategies for researching particular problems. Such research might also demand a totally innovative and creative approach to securing data.

Action research does not consist of any one preferred research methodology or package of inquiry skills. It is wholistic and eclectic, using case studies as well as questionnaires; interviews, rating scales, participant and non-participant observation and many other techniques for securing sound empirical data. It resembles 'formative evaluation' by using a host of methods to obtain data and monitor some complex on-going problem.

12) Scientific

Perhaps the least recognized feature of action research is that it is rigorously 'scientific'. Deriving as it does from the Science in Education movement, Deweyan Experimentalism and Group Dynamics, it advocates a careful set of principles of procedure.

Procedures In Action Research : The Scientific Method

1) Identification of a curriculum problem or difficulty;
2) Suggesting proposals for action-development of the action plan;
3) Selection of action steps and formulation of hypotheses for testing;
4) Planning for data collection;
5) Gathering the evidence;

6) Conclusions from the data;
7) Dissemination of findings and solutions.

Figure 1 below suggests how three prominent exponents of action research have used the 'scientific method' to inform their inquiries:

FIGURE 1 Scientific inquiry and the action research process

Dewey (1910)	Lewin (1947a)	Corey (1953)
1 Recognise problem (indeterminate situation)	General idea	Identify problem
2 Observation of problem	Reconnaisance (fact-finding)	Form hypotheses
3 Suggested solutions hypotheses	General planning	Recording of actions gather data
4 Reasoning of ideas	Execution of action step 1	Inference from data Generalizations
5 Experimental testing (verification/ corroboration)	Decision about action steps, further fact-finding	Continuous re-testing of generalizations in action scenario
6 Conclusions		

Probably the most important distinction which separates action research from more casual commonsense inquiry is that a rigorous process of systematic data collection, testing and interpretation is employed. There is a sense of curiosity, or the desire to understand; there is second a need for order in the data; finally there is a practicality dimension, or the desire to improve one's situation.

13) Critical

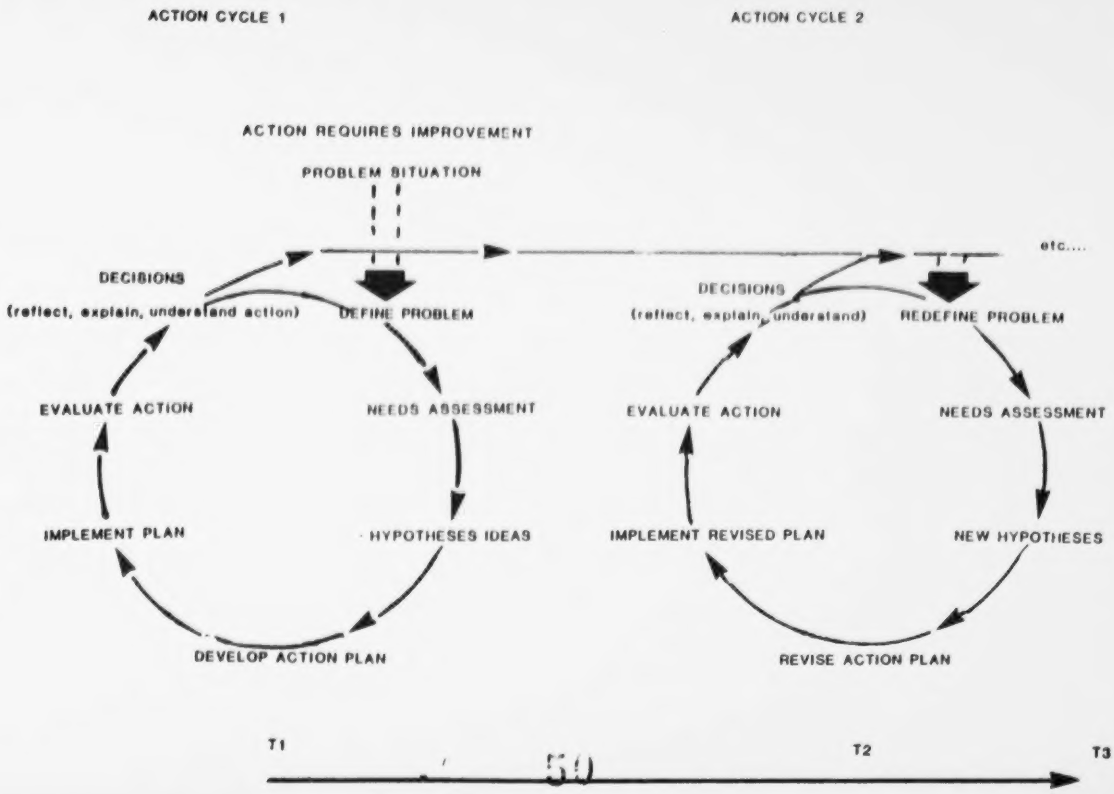
Action research is not interested in the construction of grand theory but in developing a reasoned critique grounded in social practice. Self-reflection causes insights and ideas to arise from the examination of practice. The validity of critical perspective can only be verified through practical discourse among those concerned. Criticism is thus a pivotal aspect of the entire process of action research. Self-reflection on the action is essential for real understanding to result. The instrument for critique is the collaborative group. The adoption of a new course of action which emancipates the group is a concrete development from the critique of the social milieu.

THE PRACTITIONER AND THE ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS : A NEW MODEL

The First Cycle of Action

A time process model of the action research process is depicted in Figure 2. The model may be interpreted in the following way: at some particular point in time (T_1) an indeterminate, or problem situation is identified which requires improvement. The first action cycle is triggered off by attempts to more clearly define the problem. A careful statement of the problem next leads to a 'needs assessment' of the problem scenario. At this stage the constraints that impede progress are recognized and plans for collecting data relating to the goals or purposes of the plan are estabilished. This needs assessing is equivalent to the sort of

Figure 2 ACTION RESEARCH: TIME PROCESS MODEL


ACTION CYCLE 1
ACTION CYCLE 2
ACTION REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT
PROBLEM SITUATION
etc....
DECISIONS
(reflect, explain, understand action)
DEFINE PROBLEM
NEEDS ASSESSMENT
HYPOTHESES IDEAS
DEVELOP ACTION PLAN
IMPLEMENT PLAN
EVALUATE ACTION
DECISIONS
(reflect, explain, understand)
REDEFINE PROBLEM
NEEDS ASSESSMENT
NEW HYPOTHESES
REVISE ACTION PLAN
IMPLEMENT REVISED PLAN
EVALUATE ACTION
T1
T2
T3

'situation analysis' described by Skilbeck (1984) as the first stage of school-based curriculum development. The review of the curriculum problem will suggest hunches, or possible solutions to the problem - these are regarded scientifically as 'hypotheses' or strategic ideas deemed worthy of testing in practice. The hypotheses claim to be 'intelligent' rather than a 'correct' solution (cf. Stenhouse, 1975). The next step is to develop an overall plan of action which will act as a blueprint for the project. The plan will detail who reports to whom and when; roles and activities, etc. Implementation of this plan follows and this is the stage of installing and testing the plan in the setting. Evaluation of the action follows. At this stage the practitioner seeks to learn what the effects have been and what he or she has learned as a result of the action. A deliberate attempt to reflect upon and explain the results should increase knowledge of the problem and understanding of the plan in action. By carefully reflecting on the action the practitioner becomes a 'self-monitoring researcher'. The data and conclusions now should eventuate in certain decisions that can be made about the acceptability of various action steps.

The Second Cycle of Action

The project should now embark upon a second action cycle of events in which the experience of action cycle 1 is employed to produce a "revised definition of the problem situation" commencing at a time frame depicted by T_2 in the model. The vital point about action cycle 2 (T_2) is that the original research project and defined problem be allowed to shift and modify itself as the result of the action taken in T_2. Often action researchers believe that a problem should become rigidly fixed and adhered to.

In T_2 the problem is recast and a review of the situation is conducted. The researcher may have new ideas and hypotheses that are proferred as solutions for improving the action. These are written into the revised action plan which is tested empirically in the research setting. On the basis of evaluation and monitoring the action initiatives in T_2 are subjected to scrutiny and decisions are reached. It may be that further testing and experimentation is deemed necessary and this would form the basis for a third action cycle at T_3 and a wholly new revised action plan.

The essential feature of action research is the focus on solving practical problems, identified by practitioners, through collaboration. This 'practical' perspective in curricularizing takes precedence over theoretical model building since it is preoccupied with an answer to the question "What ought to be done?".

Discussion

The 'countenance' of action research has been flavoured by the paradigm in power during each historical period. Early action research work was highly quantitative and statistical and rooted in a positivist science of education - for example the research advocated by men like Buckingham with a strong penchant for psychometric-psychological research work as typified by conducting statistical tests on spelling word counts to test hypotheses concerning alternative actions. This type of 'scientific action research' characterized much of the early period work of men such as Boone, Buckingham, Bobbitt and Charters.

The portrait of action research and teacher inquiry advocated by Dewey and other experimentalists presents a distinctive picture of action research as self-reflective science. Despite a title such as The Sources of A Science of Education, Dewey's view of action as scientific problem-solving was quite qualitatively different than that of say, Bobbitt, Charters or other measurement-minded educational researchers. Yet scientific method is the capstone of each movement's concern.

Not only has there been a shifting conception of what counts as 'science', but the definition of action research has changed, according to one's orientation - from statistical tests of hypotheses of actions, to the emerging critical theory (Carr and Kemmis, 1983) which defines action research as "a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of a) their social or educational practices, b) their understanding of these practices, and c) the situations in which the practices are carried out" (Carr and Kemmis, 1983, 152).

In understanding the countenance of action research, one must acknowledge the diversity of approaches to doing action research. Some quantitative renditions and some qualitative approaches can be found between different time periods as well as within the same time frame. For instance, ordinary common-sense problem-solving approaches and rigorous scientific hypotheses-testing styles of action research can be found between the covers of Corey (1953).

The contemporary action research movement also recognizes a wide variety of methods and conflicting philosophies. The 'teacher-researcher' taking a case study - ethnographic approach to school problems out of the Stenhouse stable is quite different from the philosopher using critical-interpretive social science as an action research methodology. Both researchers seek understanding by employing different praxis and research methods. Such diversity has important implications for required, or needed, research skills as noted by Walker (1985) and Hopkins (1985).

Some final observations. Research is a method. Research is a mode of looking at the world; a point of view. Practitioners, it may be argued, are not only distributors of curriculum knowledge, but also producers of knowledge. A research stance by practitioners will provide us with what Schon (1983) has referred to as 'reflection-in-action', or, schools that learn for themselves. Besides, research-based teaching engages both practitioner and student in a shared search for knowledge. It thus sets up knowledge, and the taught curriculum as 'provisional'; open to question, and problematic. The practitioner is not cast as an expert but as an inquirer and learner; treating his or her practice as improvable and provisional. Action research thus becomes the basis for personal and professional development.

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THE TEACHER AS CURRICULUM DEVELOPER
An aspect of the Junior English Pilot Project
1983-1985

Diarmuid Leonard

Introduction

A recurring theme in the curriculum literature is the idea that curriculum development should intimately involve the teacher. Yet remarkably few curriculum development projects have in fact put unequivocally into practice the idea of the teacher-as-curriculum-developer. On the contrary, educational literature is peppered with accounts of projects whose very terminology suggests difficulties and tensions in the sharing of responsibility for curriculum development with teachers, as in, for example, 'top-down', 'external/internal', 'system focused/school focused', and 'outside-in'.[1]

This paper describes the efforts of one curriculum development project to cast its participating teachers in central roles as curriculum developers, and explores the project's experience.

Background and Aims of Project

The project described here was known as the Junior English Pilot Project. In response to criticisms of the existing Intermediate Certificate Lower-Level syllabus and examination, it was established in 1983 by the Department of Education as a two-year project for students taking the examination in 1985, and was directed by two Department of Education inspectors, Ray Frawley and Hugh O'Neill. Twenty-four teachers took part. The project's aims, reflecting the dissatisfactions that had led to its being set up, were to develop and evaluate a new syllabus and method of examination at Intermediate Certificate Lower-Course level, to raise student standards of functional literacy, and to identify more interesting and stimulating pieces of literature and areas of literary activity.[2]

The Directors' Choice of Curriculum Strategy

All the main elements of the directors' strategy were chosen to realise the directors' conception of the teacher as curriculum developer.

1) First, as the directors determined to base the project on "the common intuitions and experiences"[3] of the participating teachers, the teachers were granted genuine control over decisions about classroom work and over the direction of curriculum policy.

2) Since the directors wished to start with teacher intuitions (about the nature of classroom problems in the teaching of the lower course syllabus) and with uncertainties (about possible solutions), they adopted an experimental model of development: the teachers were asked "to identify problems, to explore them, and to suggest and test solutions".[4]

3) The curriculum rationale would evolve inductively from newly emerging successful practice: "Our policy is to follow the continuum from experiment to observation to assessment to aim".[5]

4) The rationale for the anticipated new programme would be developed by the teachers themselves. They would

be asked to make their own interpretations of their actions, and communicate to other teachers the meaning of their experiences.

The main elements then are logically consistent, and meet also complaints[6] about failure to involve teachers in finding their own solutions to the problems they consider important. Indeed, the extent to which the project strategy involved the teachers taking part could hardly be more complete. Teachers' intuitions, experiences and articulation of their experience would be at the heart of project activity. Teachers would be the prime agents of curriculum development. However, the directors' choice of strategy makes certain favourable assumptions - or perhaps acts of faith - about

- the validity and accuracy of teacher intuitions in curriculum problem solving;
- what can be accomplished by teachers carrying a normal workload
- the compatibility of individual teacher experimentation with the directors' obligation to run a common certificate examination for the project.

None of these assumptions was, to say the least, incontestably secure. For the directors, then, who bore ultimate responsibility for the project and for the pupils' preparedness for the examination, to adopt their strategy was in many respects to take a considerable risk. The directors, however, regarded their strategy not so much as a risky as an inevitable choice, since they considered it essential to reverse conventional expectations about teacher roles and responsibility in curriculum decision-making. Rejecting the assumptions built into teacher roles in the highly-regulated Irish system (i.e. of a centrally-determined syllabus and examination) and in classic models of curriculum development, the directors adopted a contrasting ideology of teacher status - in which teachers are regarded as colleagues in curriculum development, as fellow professionals capable of making decisions at curriculum rather than instructional level. But, for their strategy to succeed, not only the directors but the teachers too would have to adopt and act on the basis of this ideology.

Classroom Experiment

In fact, by the end of the first year, considerable advances were made. The teachers had consciously altered their pedagogy, and had adopted new kinds of teacher-learning activities in writing, reading, speaking and listening, new areas of activity such as drama and media studies, and new styles of teaching in which pupils were attributed a more pro-active role.[7]

How was the remarkable success of the classroom experimentation achieved? It would be a mistake to attribute its success purely to the training effects of outsiders' inputs at seminars held every six weeks. At the seminars, outside experts introduced new areas and methods such as drama and media studies, and in fact the teachers' subsequent experimentation with drama and media studies was successful. But the advances of the first year were due much more to substantial teacher development than to any direct transfer of technical input from the outside experts. To return to our example, the invited specialists in media studies and drama awakened interest in possible new areas of activity in junior English, but did not provide the teachers with working approaches immediately appropriate to their classrooms. To transfer new ideas to their own classrooms required a rigorous sifting of what they had heard and experienced at seminars, involving a willingness to undertake the intellectual labour, discomfort and risk of tackling new, potentially disruptive classroom work. Such abilities and willingness were indicative of substantial changes in teachers' self-confidence and attitude towards experimentation.

These changes, of which teachers were themselves aware, were effected through the directors' management of their project strategy. The directors presented curriculum development not as a 'delivery service' bringing centrally designed solutions, but as a form of 'empowerment'[8] in which teachers were enabled to confront the problematics of their teaching situation and to develop alternatives. To make this empowerment real, the directors radically altered the teachers' normal institutional and ideological working contexts. We shall consider here in some detail the enabling effects of these alterations.

Where the conventional teaching context, with its predetermined syllabus and stereotyped examination, reflects an ideology of central control over teachers, teachers are seen and tend to see themselves as syllabus-following functionaries whose tightly-regulated situation is a given. In this ideological framework, curriculum development limits itself to the task of updating and modifying the syllabus, and confirms the existing teacher role and status in the system. By contrast, the directors were committed to adopt a quite different view of the status of teachers in curriculum development. They wished the teachers to question the fundamental aims, values, emphases and content categories of the conventional syllabus and to explore alternatives in their classrooms.

Now, on the face of it, this second choice offered much greater hope of penetrating classroom reality and of securing real improvement there. But its ideological significance was profound for both teachers and directors. The directors abandoned conventional styles of project leadership in order to accord to the teachers' judgement and perceptions their due primacy. The teachers, finding themselves unprepared for the empowerment conferred on them, found they had to learn how to handle their new status: it is as true of Irish as American conditions that "for members of a group to discover that they are being empowered . . . is (a) rare (experience in our culture) . . . We lack the practical know-how".[9] The practical as well as ideological conditions of the project had to be got right to facilitate the teachers' empowerment. To make possible the questioning and experimentation that the project set out to encourage, the directors made a radical change in the teachers' working context: they emancipated their classroom work from its chief institutional constraint, namely the requirement to work to a definitive syllabus and examination. Since normally Irish teachers' thinking and practice are circumscribed by the prospective examination, all consideration of an examination was postponed until the end of the first term of the second year. The effect was that the teachers' emancipation from the prospect of an examination opened up their thinking about problems and alternatives.

Within the novel ideological and institutional conditions they had created, the most significant features of the directors' management were

a) the directors' definition and presentation of the project's aims and methodology, involving transfer to the teachers of authority for individual and group decisions and for policy consensus;

b) the creation and management of organisational structures and procedures, whose social and task aspects were both attuned to a fluid dynamic conception of experimental development;

c) the strategic sequence of project aims over the two-year span, carefully aligned with teachers' initial concerns and their developing perspectives.

These aspects are now discussed briefly.

The Managing of Teacher Empowerment

At the core of the project's development strategy was the idea that the teachers would "identify problems, explore them, suggest and test solutions".[10] But the progression from asserting dissatisfactions with a frustrating teacher situation to developing an agenda of curriculum problems and solutions was not at all a straightforward one for most teachers. Teachers, as below-stairs functionaries,[11] have little practice in acting as problemsolvers at curriculum rather than instructional levels. Consequently, in the first year of the project, the difficulties faced by teachers were considerable. For most, their greatest perceived difficulty was the shock of finding that they had undertaken a role very different from their usual and also from the role they had expected to play in the project. They had expected to be provided with new materials and recommended teaching approaches, and were not at all prepared for the shock of freedom that was now extended to them as primary agents of curriculum development. Indeed, all their experience of working in a closely-regulated system contradicted the likelihood that teachers would, in fact, be allowed freedom to experiment. All but two teachers reported an initial period of aimlessness and insecurity. "When are you going to tell us what to do?" was the implicit question in many teacher inquiries to the directors during their deskilling period, which lasted until January of the first year. Gradually teachers learned from the directors' words and actions that the proffered freedom was genuine. At the first seminar, the teachers explored the extent of their agreement on their dissatisfaction with the lower-course syllabus. Over the next three seminars, teachers found their new freedom did, in fact, comprehend the power to devise their own attack on these dissatisfactions, by developing their own teaching units or modifying those developed by others, and to reject as well as take up suggested options. The directors' non-directive style, their permissive supportive attitude, and their positive encouragement of a questioning stance towards long-established practices in the teaching of Junior English helped teachers grow to perceive themselves as experimenters, with the 'permission to fail' that must be part of genuine experiment.

The main project structures, especially the six-weekly seminars, contributed substantially to the teachers' acceptance of and success in their roles in experimentation and problemsolving. In the first year, the directors used the seminars to present new areas and activities for the teachers' consideration, but throughout the project perhaps their main functions were to provide a forum for discussion and consideration of issues, to provide a sounding board for teachers as they presented ideas, or plans and units which they recommended to others, or evaluation of others' units, and to maintain the sense of group solidarity and peer support that seems particularly necessary when most members work in isolation in their own schools. Teachers remarked how much they learned from their contact with their peers at these seminars, how much they enjoyed them and found them supportive and morale-raising. Evidently the seminars performed a normative-reeducative function and also promoted innovation through the social interaction of peers.

Though the directors left the identifying of problems, exploration of alternatives and evaluation of solutions in the hands of the teachers, they did determine the sequencing and allocation of time to the project major tasks. This was a critically important management decision. The first year was allocated to experiment. In the second year, experiment was consolidated, examination procedures were developed, and the work of writing up the project report began. This sequence was chosen to align the project's practical tasks with the process of developing teacher perspectives. For example, the postponement of all consideration of examinations until the second year acknowledged the distortive limiting effects of examinations on teachers' work.

In these various ways, the project management created conditions that emancipated and favoured the interplay of intuition, experimentation, reflection and evaluation that leads towards "'perspective transformation' - changing as it were the frameworks with which we think, feel, behave and view our experiences".[12] The project's experience bears out the claim that empowerment such as was conferred in the project "invests (us) with the capacity to explore, understand and transform our own thinking about both the means and the ends of teaching".[13] Teachers altered considerably their perspectives on central aspects of their work, especially their definition of their subject, their view of their pupils, and their classroom practice. As the level of responsibility shifted from merely delivering to determining the programme for their classes, so the teachers had to shift their level of decision-making, from decisions about methods and sequence to questions of first principles: why this content and that activity? But this was not an armchair exercise. All the time these questions had to be considered in the light of the particular group of pupils, in a particular classroom and school, at whom the new programme was aimed. As the conceiver and user of the evolving programme was one and the same, practice and perspectives developed in a progressive interchange.

From Experimental Practice to Articulated Principle

The directors postponed to the second year the task of articulating the project programme. Here too, as with their postponement of all consideration of examinations, they were aligning the sequencing of project tasks with the teachers' developing perspectives. If, as Lampert asserts,[14] teacher concerns are primarily with the problems arising in their classroom work, and these are highly particular and complex, then it made sense to facilitate teachers' confronting their problematics first before constructing a rationale. Eisner quotes approvingly a similar position when defending the integrity of teacher perspectives against simplistic views of planning: "we can only know our objectives in any real sense _after_ the completion of an act of instruction".[15] Problems were explored first in the particular circumstances of each teacher's classroom: only later did the collective screening of experiment indicate to what extent tested activities and content were generally successful. By giving the teachers stimulus, freedom and support to take charge of their own experiment, with the aim of screening their collective experience, the project's first year set out, as Stenhouse advocated, "to make work in curriculum speculative rather than evangelical and cumulative rather than ad hoc".[16]

By the beginning of the second year, a working philosophy, though largely tacit and intuitive, had already taken shape through the combined effect of project activities especially the teachers' individual experiment, reflection and evaluation, the deliberations at regional groups and the presentations and discussions at seminars. The directors organised the task of articulating the teachers' experience in several steps, so that the teachers would progressively refine and clarify their thinking. In the second year, new groups were set up to write reports on each of the main areas in the teaching of English, using a common set of headings. Chairpersons of these made up a drafting committee whose task was to synthesize the various reports. Two teachers were appointed to edit the finished report.

However, real difficulties got in the way of this task. Two interacting sources of difficulty can be identified, in the shortage of time for satisfactory deliberation and in the nature of the task. While the various reports were being written, the teachers were still involved in experimentation and in various tasks connected with the examining scheme, and this in addition to their normal school workload. Individually, little time was available to them for this novel, difficult task. Meetings at the seminars turned out to be insufficient. Consequently, some important issues were not fully subjected to group debate, such as the content of media studies in junior English, or the place of the novel in the programme. Shortage of funds did not permit the drafting committee to meet after the assigned two-year span to pursue such matters. In the end the directors were obliged to undertake the redrafting of the rationale.

Part of the teachers' difficulty in articulating a generalisable communicable theory might be explained by the fact that teachers' working perspectives are different from those of theory-builders. Eisner asserts that where the academic's concern with practice is the discovery of laws, the practitioner's is the creation of meanings.[17] Expressing a teacher's view, Lampert[18] has pointed out that the teachers' concerns - what and how to teach - are approached principally with regard to particulars of time, place, person and circumstance which are considered[19] to be incongruent with the order, system, economy and generally required to build a good theory. Acknowledging that practitioners and theoreticians ascribe different priorities to 'doing' and 'explaining' Reid[20] nevertheless offers ways in which the practitioner's problem-solving processes can be made explicit and their theoretical basis revealed. But the reflection and carefully structured development and criticism of ideas that he recommends require generous amounts of time and special meetings for the purpose that were not available to the project members.

Review of the Project Experience

The project demonstrated the validity of the idea of the teacher - as - curriculum - developer. Some of the ideological significance of this idea and its potential for teacher development is reflected in the project's success in its unanticipated as compared with its intended outcomes. Of the project's three aims, teachers adopted and realised with great success the aim of identifying "more interesting and stimulating content". The aim of improving general standards of functional literacy was also realised, but was reinterpreted and liberally expanded by the teachers. The aim of developing a new syllabus and method of examination was partly set aside by the teachers, for the flexibility of teacher's response to the uniqueness of each classroom could not be reconciled with the rigidity of a syllabus. Evidently, when teacher concerns and judgement are put at the heart of curriculum development the aims set by its sponsors are likely to be modified or even rejected where they are discovered to be out of focus with the teachers' developing insights. It is the fear of such a loss of control that may account for the rarity of genuine empowerment of teachers in certificated-subject curriculum projects.

Paradoxically, the project experience indicated too the importance of bold management interventions by the directors in order to facilitate the teachers' empowerment to undertake substantial critical and creative roles. It was necessary to create a novel ideological and institutional context for the project, within which teachers could explore their capacity for creative problem-solving. Other important management functions included structures and procedures to facilitate teachers' acquisition of the skills, habits and attitudes needed to develop new perspectives in their work. These included the project's social organisation, centred on the six-weekly seminar, regional groups of four members or so, and other working parties; the patterning of activities in the sequence: review of experience, experiment, conceptualisation and experiment; the careful alignment of major project tasks with teachers' emerging concerns and perspectives. Though successful in generating good innovative practice, the project did not succeed in producing a teacher-authored articulation of their own experience. It is suggested that the project's time span did not permit a satisfactory attempt at this aspiration.

It has been observed that

> curriculum development is a battle for broad and complex transformations : transformations in terms of planning and designing programmes for pupils but also and not least, transformations with respect to individuals' attitudes and expectations.

If this is so, it is concluded that the development process employed in this project has demonstrated its effectiveness as a strategy for winning such transformations.

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THE FUNCTIONING OF THE WORKING PARTY IN FIVE IRISH CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE PERIOD 1979 - 1985

Luke Murtagh

INTRODUCTION

The Challenge of Change by Tony Crooks and Jim McKernan,[1] published in 1984, is among the first comprehensive descriptions of curriculum development in Ireland. It concerns itself with the *product* of curriculum development but not with the *process*. The time has now come to concentrate on the *process* of curriculum development so that all those engaged in that process can do it more professionally.

This paper examines one aspect of that process, i.e. the functioning of the working party in the five projects listed in Table 1. The term working party is defined as a group of people who were largely responsible for developing each of the projects on behalf of the sponsors.

These projects (listed in Table 1) have been selected for two reasons:

1) I have personal involvement with each one;

2) They represent a reasonable range of curriculum development experience in this country as follows:

a) National and locally based projects with student numbers involved ranging from 150 - 5,000 students;

b) Single subject projects and projects involving complete courses;

c) Projects involving practical and academic subjects

TABLE 1 Curriculum development projects and their characteristics

Project name	No. of schools	Pupils	Sponsors	Brief description of project	Starting date of project	Pilot phase finish	Project director	Author's involvement	Curriculum advisor on working party
1 Health education Education for living	21	5,000 approx	V.E.C. H.E.B. N.W.H.B.	Personal development programme for all post-primary students	1979	1985	L. Murtagh	a) director b) working party member c) responsible to V.E.C.	Dr. J. McKernan U.C.D.
2 Application oriented mathematics	8	300	V.E.C.	Senior cycle mathematics programme	1979	1986	Dr. J. O'Donoghue Thomond College	a) member working party b) member Examinations Committee c) responsible to V.E.C.	Dr. J. O'Donoghue Thomond College
3 Pre-employment course	6	150	V.E.C. Department of Education	Preparation for employment and life	1982	1986	Mr. Seamus Hogan principal Borrisokane V.S.	a) member Examinations Committee b) responsible to V.E.C.	Mr. D. Leonard Thomond College
4 Secretarial studies, accounts, business studies, audio typing, word processing, computers	6	200	V.E.C.	Preparation for employment and life	1981	1987	Mr. J. Daffy principal Newport, U.S.	a) member examinations committee b) responsible to V.E.C.	varied
5 Junior English pilot project	20	400 approx	Department of Education	Alternative course for lower course Intermediate Cert. English	1983	1985	Mr. Hugh O'Neill Mr. Ray Frawley	Joint evaluation with D. Leonard	Mr. R. Frawley inspector Mr. H. O'Neill inspector

and a new subject, health education/education for living;

d) Projects involving examination and non-examination subjects.

The Role of the Working Party

In order to understand the functioning of the working party in the projects there is a need:

a) To place the working party in the context of the overall organisation of the projects; and

b) To examine the role of the working party.

First, I will examine the place of the working party in the overall organisational framework of the projects. In all the projects, the sponsors initiated them in response to a demand from the school system. Once a decision had been made to intervene in the curriculum, the sponsor sought the agreement of selected, interested schools to participate in a pilot project. The schools were then asked to nominate at least one teacher to a working party.

In the Secretarial Studies Project, the sponsor (the V.E.C.) was responding to a need to make the book-keeping and commerce course more relevant to the employment situation. Again, it requested the six schools in the V.E.C. to participate and to nominate a teacher from each school to the working party.

In all the projects the working party is the delivery mechanism for implementing the proposed changes in the curriculum. It is also the vehicle for establishing and maintaining close contact between the sponsor and the schools in bringing about curriculum change.

Now, I will examine the role of the working party in each project which was:

1) To develop a programme to meet the broad objectives set by the sponsoring agency;
2) To develop/adapt appropriate materials for use with the new programme in the classroom;
3) To identify and propose to the sponsor an appropriate strategy for implementing the newly-devised programme in the schools;
4) To identify the nature and extent of teacher training needed to implement the new programme;
5) To examine the implications of the examination system for the proposed programme;
6) To evaluate the new programme and to use the feedback for further development and refinement;
7) To make recommendations about dissemination.

Functioning of the Working Party in Implementing Two Aspects of its Role

Next, I will examine the process used by the working party to fulfil its role.

It is important to understand that I am talking about a process and not simply the following of a straightforward set of procedures.

Reid[2] has indicated that the working party has to solve what he terms "uncertain practical problems". These are practical problems which:

1) Unlike theoretical problems have to be answered;
2) Where the grounds on which decisions should be made

are uncertain;

3) Where those making decisions or suggesting solutions have to take into account an existing state of affairs.

According to Reid,[3] curricular problems are uncertain practical problems which cannot be resolved in a totally rational procedural way as suggested by Tyler.[4] Solving curricular problems involves deliberation which is an intellectual and social process whereby individually or collectively, grounds are established for deciding on answers and then choosing among the available solutions.

Schwab[5] describes the process as follows:

> Reflection on curriculum must take account of what teachers are ready to teach or ready to learn to teach: What materials are available and can be devised; What effects actually ensue from materials and methods chosen, not merely how well they yield intended purposes but what else ensues. But none of these can be identified except as some ends or objectives are tentatively selected and pursued. Hence, curriculum reflection must take place in a back and forth manner between ends and means. A linear movement from ends to means is absurd.

To help understand that process, it is useful to examine the membership of each working party as shown in Table 2.

These are the characteristics of the membership of the working parties:

1) The vast majority of the members are teachers;

2) Each school participating in the pilot phase of the projects is represented on the working party.

3) Each working party, except Secretarial Studies, has a curriculum advisor as a member, who is involved in teacher education or teacher development;

4) All school types and sizes are represented;

5) Teachers of all ages are represented in each project

and both sexes are on all working parties, except one.

In examining the functioning of the working parties in the five projects, I will look at how they function in dealing with two aspects of their role, i.e.:

a) Developing a programme to meet the objectives set by the sponsoring agency;

b) looking at the implications of the examination system for the new programme.

A brief given by the project's sponsors had to be translated by the working party into a reality that was effective in the classrooms of the project's schools. To achieve this, the working party:

1) Established a broad set of principles for the new programme;

2) Developed an outline programme which reflected these principles;

3) Developed/adapted/identified materials which reflected the principles.

Let us examine how the working party carried out each element of this task; the first task was:

1) Establishing a broad set of principles : In all the projects there was very general and free-ranging discussion at the early meetings. In this discussion, as Schwab[6] puts it, the participants were trying to "locate and discover the real problem". In this phase the working party is trying to establish a broad set of principles, or, as Reid[7] states, the working party is trying to deal with:

> Curriculum tasks, which are embedded in unique contexts that must be deliberately appraised before these solutions can be chosen. The conclusion is that the main instrument for the solution of curriculum

TABLE 2 Membership of working parties and school-teacher characteristics

Project title	No. of members	Teachers	Others	Chairperson	No. of teachers per school	Type of school	School size			Sex of teachers		Age range of teachers 1/1/83		
							0-250	250-500	500+	M	F/M	U-30	30-45	45
Health education/ education for living	14/15	12/13	C.E.O. curriculum advisor	teacher	1-3	vocational	2	3	1	8	5	3	7	3
Applications oriented mathematics	9	7	C.E.O. curriculum advisor	teacher	1	vocational	2	3	1	6	1	2	4	1
Pre-employment	8	6	principal curriculum advisor	principal	1	vocational	2	3	1	6	0	1	3	2
Secretarial	7	6	principal	principal	1	vocational	2	3	1	1	5	1	4	1
Junior English	27	25	2 inspectors	inspectors (joint)	1	vocational secondary community comprehensive	7	5	8	10	15	10	10	5

> problems must be deliberation or practical reasoning.

This is a very complex and time-consuming process. Schwab[8] feels that as many as ten meetings may be needed to establish a basis for curriculum decisions. That suggestion is certainly borne out by the experience in all of the projects being examined in this paper. I have personally found this phase of the work in curriculum development projects to be very difficult, time-consuming and occasionally frustrating. After a meeting where the working party is trying to establish basic principles, I usually feel physically and mentally drained. This is true even after a frustrating meeting. If the meeting has not been fruitful, I usually feel angry, resentful and frustrated.

Apart from the inherent complexity of the task, there is at least one other factor which adds to the difficulty, i.e.:

a) The diversity of the background of members of the working party. Among the differences are:

   - Philosophy of life
   - Life experience
   - Social background
   - Method of approaching issues of principle
   - Teaching experience
   - Expertise in the area of the curriculum being reviewed by the project
   - Size of school in which teacher is working
   - Education and social mix of the school
   - Role of the other working party members within education or outside it
   - Age
   - Sex

b) Outline Programme

The development of the outline programme is a complex task which involves establishing priorities and the selection of appropriate content. The programme selected has to reflect the age and educational level of the students for whom it is developed and has to take into account the amount of time available on the school timetable.

c) Materials

The third task is the adaptation or development of materials. If the materials have to be developed from scratch it is a very time-consuming operation. The scale of the task can be appreciated by examining what happened in the Health Education/Education for Living Project where the materials had to be developed *ab initio*. Because of time (and financial) constraints, where currently practising teachers were members of the working party, that process will take at least six years. The following procedure was used in developing materials for the project:

Stage 1

Materials were developed by individual members of the working party for each topic identified in the outline programme according to an agreed format worked out under the guidance of Jim McKernan the "curriculum advisor". They were then discussed at a working party meeting and amended if necessary. The next step involved testing in the classroom. The feedback from the classroom was considered by the working party and the materials were amended again in light of that feedback. The final typed version was then produced and circulated to all the project schools. These student materials had matching teachers' notes for each lesson and unit developed.

Stage 2

Photocopying these materials for distribution in the classrooms caused serious problems for the project teachers. It was therefore decided, when the project received some funding, to print the materials in book form. Three editors, all members of the working party, were appointed to edit the student and teacher junior cycle materials. These books were printed and distributed for internal private circulation in the projects school. Finally, a single editor was appointed for the printing of the senior cycle materials which contained a student's book and a teacher's book. These books represented a considerable improvement on the junior cycle materials as the editor had acted on the negative feedback on the junior cycle books and had consequently paid more attention to layout and design.

Stage 3

Both the working party and sponsors were conscious of the shortcomings of the printed junior cycle materials and the need to revise them. As a first step, a two-day "write-in" was held to review the materials. The "write-in" was attended by:

a) Members of the working party;
b) Members of the steering committee;
c) Four invited guests who had expertise in materials development.

The curriculum advisor, Jim McKernan, had overall responsibility for the organisation of the write-in. As a result of the write-in, it was agreed that the revised version:

a) Should be more student-oriented;

b) That the presentation of the material should be very professional;

c) That the sequence and order of the materials needed to be re-examined.

Consequently, it was decided to appoint a single editor* and an artist for all the junior cycle materials. That editor was a member of the working party. An essential part of the editor's brief was to prepare notes for teachers and to advise on teaching strategies for each lesson and each unit of the materials. The curriculum advisor, with two members of the working party, prepared a teacher's handbook which outlined the background and the philosophy to the project. Finally, Gill and Macmillan published the junior cycle materials in September, 1986.

Junior English

The process of the junior English project was somewhat different, though the essential elements were the same, i.e. the identification of the broad programme outline; the testing of materials in the classroom and reporting back to the working party. Particular aspects of English were discussed at working party meetings and then members tested the materials and the teaching strategies in the classroom and reported back. Successful materials and strategies were adopted. There were three important factors in this process of material development:

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* The editor was to work under the guidance of the curriculum advisor. However, he was unavailable.

1) Group deliberation on the materials and teaching methodologies;

2) A variety of perspectives brought to bear on the problem of developing the materials;

3) The deliberation on the strategy for developing materials and on the materials themselves was carefully managed by the curriculum advisors.

b) Implications of the Examination System

This was an important feature of the work in all the projects being considered, except the Health Education/Education for Living Project. There were two important considerations for the working party in relation to the examinations as follows:

1) The working party sought, where appropriate, to have the subject/course included in the state examination system;

2) Where that was not possible or appropriate, the working party devised its own examination and secured recognition from employers and/or appropriate education institutions.

Table 3 sets out the situation relating to examinations in each project.

The importance of the examination system within each project and its effect on the operation of the working parties would merit a separate paper.

However, the centrality of that role is clearly illustrated by what happened in the Junior Cycle English and the Applications Oriented Mathematics Projects.

TABLE 3 Curriculum projects and examination arrangements

Project title	Examination arrangements
1 Health Education/ Education for Living	No examination
2 Applications Oriented Mathematics	a) Sponsors organised a special examination. They established a special independent Exam-Committee to validate the examination
	b) Sponsors got recognition for the exam. from: a) AnCO; b) N.C.E.A.; c) An Bord Altranais
3 Junior English pilot project	a) Approval by sponsors for special examination recognised as part of Intermediate Certificate examination
	b) Working party members were involved in the examination
4 Pre-Employment	a) A Certificate of Attendance issued by the Department of Education
	b) Central and standardised assessment procedure organised by sponsors with a special Examinations Committee which visited all schools and validated the examination
5 Secretarial Studies	a) Sponsors developed examinations
	b) Have got recognition for certificate through acceptance by employers
	c) Examinations Committee has been established to validate examinations

In the Junior English Project, the Department of Education had given the imprimatur for a special examination of equal status to the existing lower course Intermediate Certificate English examination. Consequently, consideration of the examination was postponed until the second half of the project. No time had been given at working party meetings to preparing a proposal for an examination to be submitted to the Department of Education.

The only question to be considered by the working party was choice and implementation of the appropriate methods of assessment. On the other hand, in the Applications Oriented Mathematics Project, the working party had to:

1) Prepare a submission to the Department of Education seeking recognition of the examination as the equivalent of the Leaving Certificate pass mathematics examination;

2) Follow that up with a verbal representation. When the Department refused to give recognition, the working party had to:

3) Devise its own examination and have it validated;

4) Seek recognition for the examination form employers and appropriate educational institutions.

Examinations were a dominant theme in the life of the working party with at least fifty percent of the time being given over to it. But, even more important than that was the negative effect the Department's decision had on the morale of the working party.

GENERAL FACTORS IN THE FUNCTIONING OF THE WORKING PARTY

I have examined how the working party functioned in implementing two of its tasks in the curriculum development process. I will next examine a number of the factors which, I feel, were vital to the successful functioning of the working party in relation to its total role, i.e.:

- The effective use of the curriculum advisor
- Good chairperson
- The development of a team spirit
- Using the strengths of working party members
- The adoption of proper procedures
- The dedication of the participants

Effective Use of the Curriculum Advisor

The task to be undertaken by the curriculum advisor, or, as Fox[9] calls him

> The Curriculum Chairman is . . . leading the process of curriculum development from its inception to its completion. This includes leading the deliberation as well as guiding the "tryouts" that lead to the concrete embodiments in the curriculum.

It is such a demanding task that Schwab[10] feels the curriculum specialist must receive training and serve an apprenticeship.

In the Health Education/Education for Living Project, the working party originally consisted of teachers and myself who had no real experience of curriculum development. It had succeeded in establishing the general principles of the project outlining the course content. Project teachers were expected to deliver in the classroom with this skeleton programme which had a poorly articulated set of principles. This gave rise to dissatisfaction on the part of the project teachers who felt that there was a definite need for materials and teaching notes to help them with their task. The working party did not know how to go about developing the materials and, as a result, members became very despondent.

Dr. Jim McKernan, Lecturer in Education in U.C.D., then joined the working party. He operated in two distinct ways:

1) He prepared a number of formal discussion papers and made inputs to the project on curriculum development, materials development and teacher training;

2) Then, through discussion with the project teachers, a general strategy was developed for preparing materials and implementing the project in the classroom.

As has been pointed out, debate and discussion is an essential part of curriculum development, as is the need for an acute sensitivity by the curriculum advisor to the current sophistication level of the teacher members of the working party. That point is well illustrated by an incident that occurred in the Pre-Employment Working Party. It was reviewing a scheme-based examination system, which had been operating during the previous school year, and was planning to develop it further. Dermot Leonard, the curriculum advisor, prepared a position paper for the guidance of the working party. However, because of a visit abroad he was unable to attend the meeting where the paper was discussed. Consequently, the working party made very heavy weather of the review process and the document. In fact, it was a frustrating and negative exercise for members, which had a bad effect on morale.

It was only later when Dermot Leonard was able to be present at a working party meeting to discuss, elucidate and explore the document that the members of the working party were able to use it constructively as a set of guidelines for planning future examinations.

As a result of the experience gained in these projects, I feel that a curriculum development project cannot operate successfully without the involvement of a curriculum advisor.

Good Chairperson

As much of the working party's time is taken up with meetings involving deliberative discussion, a good chairperson is vital. This is particularly important at the very difficult early stages of all projects where general principles are being thrashed out. The chairperson has to allow each member of the working party to contribute fully to the process and then abstract, promote and articulate a consensus. If the chairperson, on the other hand, allows the discussion to go around in circles, the project will never even get off the ground. A key task to be undertaken by the chairperson is to facilitate the curriculum advisor in making his/her contribution to the curriculum development process. The role of the chairperson is a highly complex one. Hence project directors should ensure, as far as is democratically possible, that the person selected for the chair is capable of doing the job.

The Development of a Team Spirit

For any project to be successful, the working party must develop a strong team spirit. For this to happen members must:

a) Be there as volunteers;

b) Be interested in their subject and in the proposed changes;

c) Identify closely with the aims, philosophy and procedures of the project.

This really means having a sense of ownership of the project. That sense of ownership has been particularly strong in the case of the English, Mathematics and Health Education Projects; it is growing in the case of the others.

To maintain that sense of ownership, members of the working party should:

i) Feel they are achieving something worthwhile;

ii) Have a pleasant social experience during working party meetings;

iii) Feel that their work is valued and appreciated.

Using the Strengths of Working Party Members

The project director must recognise that individual members of working parties have strengths and weaknesses. He should ensure that members are given the opportunity to use their strengths.

In the evaluation of Junior English, three distinct types of teacher strengths in the classroom were identified - the ability:

- To create and innovate
- To adapt and experiment with recommended materials
- To evaluate, report and communicate.

Among the other general strengths in working party members I have identified are the ability:

- To write and identify appropriate materials
- To contribute original ideas
- To act as teacher trainers
- To chair meetings
- To act as secretary
- To set examinations.

All of these abilities must be present in the working party if it is to succeed.

Adoption of Proper Procedures

Meetings of the working party should be organised in a professional way. Particular emphasis should be placed on the keeping of minutes and the preparation and advance circulation of discussion papers for meetings.

If proper procedures are not followed there will be much time-wasting and confusion, which leads to frustration for working party members. It is good procedure to subdivide the main group, where appropriate, for specific tasks. This increases overall efficiency.

The Dedication of the Participants

This is a very vital ingredient in the success of any project. It depends on two factors:

a) Careful choice of working party members in the first instance;

b) Successful implementation of the other factors discussed in this section.

CONCLUSION

The working party is a key element in the curriculum development process. The process used by the working party in carrying out its role in curriculum development is highly complex and sophisticated and depends to a significant degree on two key people: the chairperson and the curriculum advisor. They facilitate the members of the working party, through careful and structured deliberation and through the use of sound meeting procedures, in carrying out their task. The deliberation is not purely rational and mechanical - rather it is an intellectual and social process which involves "considerable movement back and forth between ends and means".[11]

However, before a project is finalised and ready for dissemination, there is often a need for a "quantum leap" in thinking and development to pull the various principles, experiences and materials together into a coherent whole. This leap can be provided by a small element within the overall working party who have got the appropriate expertise and who harness the experiences they have gained through active participation in the working party process. That "quantum leap" is the final and critical step for the working party.

At the start of this paper, I said that the time had come to study the process of curriculum development in Ireland. This review of the working party in five Irish curriculum projects is a small contribution to that study.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN TEACHER EDUCATION : AN EXPLORATORY PAPER

Susan M. Parkes and Ann FitzGibbon

Our experience of the Higher Diploma in Education students over some years led us to tentatively identify some needs of the students regarding their readiness for teaching. We observed that the students had rarely considered the complexities of teaching including the many roles of a teacher, the varied relationships. They appear not to have identified themselves as teachers other than in the cognitive sense as a conveyer of information, with the affective domain being frequently neglected. In an attempt to rectify these aspects, we designed a preservice experimental course of a week which formed part of an optional three-week preservice course held in July. This course included an autobiographical section. Our aims for the entire course, based on our observations of students on the Higher Diploma in Education course, were:

1) That the students learn to reflect on, and evaluate, their educational experience, and thereby identify the qualities and faults of teachers, and their own potential;

2) That the students should be able to discuss the role of a teacher in relation to themselves, taking into account the many types of relationships which a teacher encounters professionally;

3) That the students experience different methodologies, including the generation and handling of data without a class.

The major emphasis of the week's course was on creating space and time for the students to recall their own experiences, to evaluate them in discussion with both lecturers and fellow students, to use writing and other media to express themselves, to act out the role of teacher using video equipment for self-analysis leading to increased skills in self-evaluation and reflection. The course included simulation exercises both to diversify the learning experiences and to allow increased awareness of the affective domain in teaching and learning.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

The autobiographical section was presented differently each year. In the first year the idea of writing an educational autobiography was introduced following a discussion of personal experiences of teachers, referring to the qualities and faults, likes and dislikes; inviting the students to recall specific situations: the first memory of school, a time they were praised, embarrassed, etc. Guidelines were given: the students could use first or third person, an incident rather than a summary could be used, the students were free to sign their names or not, to discuss their writings with others, or not. Each student had a free afternoon for writing with debriefing scheduled later. In the second year some discussion of teachers was still included, principally to identify aspects of the role of teachers and the multidimensional nature of teaching. Following the discussion the recall of incidences and especially emotions, were stimulated by using a "centering" exercise and a visualisation exercise (an unstructured guided imagery form). The students were then invited to write down their experiences immediately following this exercise. (Some students needed more time.)

This change introduced the students to a methodology which was likely to be both unfamiliar to them, and useful to the task in hand.

Centering and imagery exercises were used to assist the students to get in touch with the emotions of the experiences and to be able to recall them vividly. By centering is meant the relaxing of the body, the calming of the emotions, and the clearing of the mind. Normally the participants are invited to make themselves comfortable in a position which allows oxygen to flow freely through their body. They are then invited to calm their feelings and thoughts. This usually creates stillness within a person which permits imaging to occur with a clarity of sensing perceptions. In an unstructured exercise the participants are given minimum instructions. In this case they were asked to recall any incident and then invited to use all their senses and to feel the emotions, if such was helpful for them. In a structured exercise they might be focussed on, for example, their first day in secondary school and guided with directions "see yourself in your school uniform, walking up towards the schools, who do you see?" Some students chose not to participate in the exercise and worked on their own.

The importance and advisability of developing self-awareness and recording techniques over a period of time is accepted. Case studies in Hellawell (1985) incorporated self-development into their pre and inservice teacher education programmes suggest this. As does Abbs (1974) who, in advocating the inclusion of autobiography into teacher education, suggests a minimum of one hour per week for one term, unlike Powell (1985) who used autobiography similarly to us. The amount of time given to the autobiographical input in our experimental course would be, in fact, rather similar, given one counts the preparation, writing and debriefing sessions. Our experiences in the course were, by their very nature, limited and we are aware of this. We found that the concretness of writing was very valuable but would recommend that the debriefing should be given a more generous allocation of time.

Research literature in the area of autobiography falls under three main headings: the use and effectiveness of autobiography as a source of personal learning; the use of centering as a technique; and, thirdly, the use of guided imagery. The latter plays an important part in psychotherapy; coverage here will be restricted to the educational applications.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Freud's basic concept of the repetitious compulsion which states that throughout life we tend to repeat familiar patterns of behaviour even though they may be counter-productive (Kirman, 1977), can be recognised in our personal life by examining our past behaviour. We suggest that entering a similar environment may stimulate such patterns. The new experience may reflect a reaction pattern which can be expressed in either of two ways: the student teacher tries to behave in an opposite way; usually according to Kirman (1977) "a return to the repressed" occurs and the underlying punitiveness re-emerges; or the reaction may be genuine, for example, a student who has been over-exposed to strict discipline may be over permissive as a teacher insisting on the children expressing their feelings. This is not necessarily helpful as the student may be meeting his/her own needs rather than those of the children. Either way, the student is not choosing his/her behaviour.

The first stage in teacher preparation, Kirman considers, should be self-awareness stimulation. Abbs (1974) advocated the introduction of autobiography into teacher education arguing that it facilitates the student's understanding of "true knowledge" which is "existential knowledge". The act of autobiography, above all, reveals to the students the truth of this proposition, and, in so doing, prepares him to become a "responsible and responsive teacher" (p. 6). He contends that autobiography helps in answering the question "Who am I?"

> as it is a research backward into time to discover the evolution of the self, allowing the identification of connections which "draw the self and the world together in one evolving gestalt".

This is also the aim of an Open University course (Barnes, 1981) which uses autobiographical writing as an introduction to current issues on education. Grumet (1979) identifies the positive uses of autobiography also, using a similar method of reflexive analysis with students in teacher education and theatre courses.

CENTERING AND GUIDED IMAGERY

The techniques of mental imagery have a long history forming part of the ways that man sought to enhance inner life: induced dreams, using hallucinogenic drugs, fasting and isolation were used to evoke the symbolic potential of the psyche (Crampton, 1982). The modern development of the technique can be traced to the late 19th century within the development of the different psychotherapies.

There are several terms used in this area, "waking daydream", "active imagination" although as practiced by Jungians this is not limited to visualisation but includes painting, sculpture, dancing, acting and writing.

The use of imagination and intuition extends beyond psychotherapies. Capra (1975) has described how scientific research has used imagination in clarifying and expanding rational operations. Many scientific discoveries began as dreams or images; Kekulé's discovery of the benzene ring structure is a classic example, quoted by Gardner (1984, p. 191). Kekulé, a chemist, describes his dream which led to his insight that benzene and related organic compounds were closed rings rather than open structures,

> again the atoms were gamboling before my eyes . . . my mental eye . . . could not distinguish larger structures . . . all twining and twisting in snake-like motion. But look! What was that? One of the snakes had seized its own tail and the form whirled mockingly before my eyes. As if by a flash of lightning I awoke.

The use of guided imagery in psychology and medicine has spread; an interest in using imagery as a means of self-awareness commenced with Maslow (1954) and continued with May (1961, 1968). Rogers (1961, 1980), Singer (1974, 1983) and Shorr (1974), for example, have used imagery in counselling and, in Singer's case, to stimulate imaginative development. In education, the need to be sensitive to all aspects of humans, that is the emotional, physical and spiritual domains as well as the cognitive one, is increasingly recognised and acted on. Visualisation and guided imagery work is very relevant in these areas. In general, imagery used in educational settings fall into four categories:

1) Relaxing, centering, focussing, which help in preparing the mind for learning, reducing stress, sharpening the inner vision;

2) Accelerating and expanding cognitive mastery;

3) Deepening affective growth and awareness of inner resources, the skill of self-understanding and appreciation, communication, relationships, with the development of conflict resolution and problem-solving elements included, require an affective methodology and with an explicit understanding of the objectives in choosing the methodology. Often skills in this area are expected to be "caught" rather than taught;

4) Transpersonal growth; this is one of those difficult words, jargonistic, in fact. Basically, it is an attempt to state simply the human potential to go beyond the ordinary state of consciousness into those areas which gifted English and religious education teachers especially have tried to guide their students. The intellectual capacities being taught are metaphoric thinking, symbolic language, synectics in addition to the exploration of spiritual themes such as "divine love", "oneness of being".

We suggest that in choosing to introduce this methodology to students, admittedly in a limited way, we are helping to prepare them to work in a world which is increasingly technological in orientation whilst simultaneously individualised, and which requires self-development. Perhaps the position is best stated by Turkle (1984). When examining the implication of the computer society, she identifies the problem as

> . . . terrified of being alone yet afraid of intimacy, we experience wide spread feeling of emptiness, of disconnection,

> of the unreality of the self. And here the computer, a companion, offers a compromise. You can be a loner, but never alone. You can interact, but need never feel vulnerable to another person.

Turkle links the challenge that Freud posed to the notion of ourselves as the centre of ourselves (insofar that Freud's theories suggest that our life choices are determined by our earliest learning experiences) with the present one (in which the computer takes the idea of a decentred mind and concretises it as a multi-processing machine, so how are we different?). The quest is to be able to state an understanding of the human mind as other than machine. She quotes Weizenbaum, who argues that the computer, linear, logical and rule-governed, encourages the kind of thinking that magnifies the place of instrumental reason in our culture. His response is to value as most human what is most different from the computer, e.g. "the things 'we know and cannot tell'". For Turkle, humanness is linked to mortality and "it is our mortality that impels us to search for transcendence - in religion, history, art, the relationship in which we hope to live on" (p. 311).

And so, as indicated earlier, part of the intent in using imagery with education students is to provide them with an opportunity of using intellectual and symbolic processes for personal explorations (intra-personal communication), for helping relationships (interpersonal communication) as well as processing external simula (extrapersonal communication); in other words, to develop those human capacities ignored by technology.

Other research findings and experimental work in the effectiveness of guided imagery in self-development can be found in Singer et al. (1983) with very young children, and in Galyean (1981, 1982) with primary and secondary school pupils. Hall (1985) describes the use of imagery in his work with experienced teachers as part of an M.Ed course in human relations.

In our own education department, in addition to the autobiography used in the preservice course, a study of the evolution of personal religious belief is used by the students taking religious education methods and, through our contact with Alverno College, Milwaukee, we have learnt of experiential work done there. As part of their Off Campus Experiential Learning programme (OCEL), autobiography and a journal form part of courses for mature and inservice students. The need for students to identify themselves as professionals before commencing a work placement in a professional capacity is seen as an essential component of the OCEL course.

ANALYSIS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

In our analysis of the students' autobiographies, we decided to place them into two categories: those recalling positive experience of school and those recalling negative. Over the two years we had collected over 100 essays in all. Differences were discernible in the autobiographies written in two years: the first year ones, written over a four-day period, recorded both positive and negative experience in an overall assessment, while the second year ones, written in a much shorter time within a workshop class, following the centering exercise, concentrated more on specific incidents in which negative experience tended to predominate.

Geva and Smilansky (1985), examining the saliency for pupils of disruptive classroom activities, record that the pupils were more sensitive to disruptions than any other events in a lesson, especially for the high socio-economic status school chidren. This can be extended here in that most university graduates tend to be from high socio-economic status backgrounds and of average and above-average ability. Geva and Smilansky explain their findings by stating that disruptions are a novelty in the high socio-economic status school. Therefore, for these students negative experience may be the most remembered because it was, in fact, rare. The majority of the students were aged about 22, having attended school in the second half of the 1970s, though there were some mature students among both groups. In the second year we invited the students to include a short final reflective paragraph on how they thought the recorded experience might affect them in the role of a teacher. These paragraphs provided pertinent and perceptive comments which had not appeared the previous year when the direct link between autobiography and the prospective role as a teacher had not been discussed.

The positive school experience of the students showed the importance of success - of academic achievement and love of specific subject (and usually of the teacher of that specific subject), of sporting prowess, of school concerts and plays and of the security of friendship and routine. Teachers were admired for being fair and just, for not using violence either verbal or physical, for arousing interest in their subject, and for giving time to their pupils out of class. The main teacher characteristics recalled included sarcasm, humour, kindness or unkindness, enthusiasm for the subject, encouragement and respect for pupils and the use of punishment or humiliation. Many presented a 'model' of a good teacher which they hoped to emulate ("If I can teach as well as her I will be very happy"), but without considering whether or not that 'model' teacher's style would necessarily suit different pupils or all subjects. Most agreed that school had developed them as people in one way or another and that they had gained from being given responsibility and freedom at a young age. Some recognised that they 'grew' while at school and therefore that what they wanted from a teacher in the latter years was different from what they had required when younger.

On the other hand, some could see perceptively that a successful school career might not be the best preparation for a teacher. Many pupils do not enjoy school and this is often expressed in uncooperative and rebellious behaviour. School may show you that you cannot always be successful and can teach you to accept a 'ticking off' and an understanding of 'failure'. The extent of knowing "how a pupil feels" is limited if your school experience was only of 'success'.

The recollection of negative experience showed that humiliation by a teacher is seldom forgotten. "I will always remember" - and it would appear that they had. The main cry from these essays was "for space to be allowed to grow", to have the right to disagree, to choose the subjects which you preferred and not to have to conform to a school type. The Pink Floyd song quoted by a student seemed to express it well:

> We don't need no education
> We don't need no forced control
> No dark sarcasm in the classroom
> Teacher, leave those kinds alone!

Many of these negative experience essays revealed a near missionary zeal to reform the school and not to be the type of teacher that they had suffered under. "My aim will be to do the exact opposite of that which was done to me." Some had endured subjects which they hated "like art when you couldn't draw", or doing home economics when you wanted to do biology but were in the 'wrong stream' or being worst in the class and not able to keep up.

The agony of being the teacher's pet and of being singled out for good work and the jealousy of not being the teacher's pet were equally miserable. Labelling was resented - pupils from the local national school being placed in lower streams than the pupils from the junior school, a 'bad' class being expected to be 'bad' by all the teachers, pupils required to play the role of being 'boisterous adventurous and offhand' when they would really have liked to have worked at a subject, and cruel bullying which the teachers seemed to know about but wouldn't or couldn't stop. Resentment at the arbitrary use of power had left many very angry - angry at being sent out of the room for something they hadn't done, at not being allowed to disagree, at confiding in a teacher and then finding that the trust had been broken, and at lack of understanding that non-cooperation and poor motivation may have many causes other than just 'being stupid'. Public humiliation and letters sent home to parents had destroyed trust in school and created tension at home, reference to parentage and home background were deeply resented, and the feeling of loneliness and betrayal when left by your mother in the first day of school "in the hands of a lady in a dark frock" never forgotten.

This negative experience of school had created a desire not to be like 'that'; to be quite different, to give pupils time and space, to allow them to express their ideas and encourage self-confidence, not to have 'pets' or to single out any child by either praise or rebuke. However, these desires may be ideal rather than real and when under stress the student teachers may revert to what they recall as 'teacher behaviour'. Some years ago, a supervisor witnessed a student teacher humiliating a pupil in front of a class. Concerned about the incident which seemed quite out of character from the student as she knew her, the supervisor probed the episode. Eventually the student recalled having been herself humiliated by a teacher in such a way, though she had not thought consciously about the episode for years. She had waited a long time "to have her revenge". It would seem, therefore, very important for student teachers to have the opportunity to examine and come to terms with their own school experience in order to 'free' themselves to form their own positive actions as teachers.

The autobiographies showed limited understanding of the complexities and pressures of the teacher's role. Teaching is seen only in terms of the simple classroom teacher-pupil relationship. Professional relationships with fellow staff, the confines of the curriculum and accountability to the school authorities, parents and society at large are little explored. These are areas of which the prospective teacher has had little or no experience and the realization that a teacher cannot and does not operate in 'splendid isolation' within the classroom but is subject to numerous 'outside' pressures often brings bitter disillusionment to the young teacher.

Teaching is seen from a consumer-pupil point of view and the teacher appears omnipotent. While recognising the value which school experience has for prospective teachers, it also is vital to acknowledge its limitations and to probe this view of the teacher as a person who apparently has complete power to control and manipulate other people's lives.

We place much emphasis on the cognitive preparation of teachers requiring a primary subject degree and postgraduate education studies, but we have neglected the affective preparation. Student teachers need to be encouraged to develop professional attitudes and relationships which are essential for a successful and fulfilling career. Reflective autobiography may be one way of beginning such a preparation.

In conclusion, overall, we consider that we have found experimental work with autobiography worthwhile and propose to continue exploring it further. In Grumet's (1981, p. 122) words:

> . . . it is a method of curriculum research . . . to restore the visions printed by years of schooling. The vision is rarely revealed in the text but hovers in and around it. The narrative, an autobiographical account of educational experiences serves to mark the site for excavation. What is returned in the process of excavation is hardly the original experience but broken pieces of images that reminds us what was last. What is restored is our distrust of the account, as the experience, pieced together and reassembled, fails to cohere. There in the interstices, the spaces where the pieces don't quite meet, is where the light comes through. What the restoration returns to us is doubt in the certainty of our own assumptions and without that doubt reconstruction dwindles into reification.

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IN-SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS : SOME IMPLICATIONS IN THE IRISH CONTEXT

Declan Irvine

The aim of this study was to obtain information from second-level teachers in a sample of schools in Counties Clare and Galway, on the issues confronting them in their own schools and classes. It was primarily a school-focussed pilot-study, the findings of which might provide guidelines for a more detailed study of teachers' views on the structure, content and format of INSET programmes. Issues raised in this paper and examined in the survey include: the place of INSET in the total professional development of teachers; the needs of teachers and the needs of schools; structural and organisational aspects of INSET and some priorities for INSET.

INSET, as an integral part of the total professional development of the teacher, is probably the major recommendation to emerge from this study. Many of the problems besetting the development of adequate and relevant INSET programmes in this country, such as the non-facilitation of attendance at INSET, arise mainly because of the peripheral status ascribed to INSET. INSET in Ireland, as in other places, has not been as effective as it might have been, basically because of the lack of involvement of practising teachers in all aspects of planning and organisation.

INTRODUCTION

One of the main arguments for adult and continuing education is the almost universal rejection of the 'front-end' model of education and training, whereby all that one needs to know for life or livelihood is provided during one's early years. In virtually every walk of life there is an increasing awareness of the necessity or even urgency of keeping up to date and continuing one's education and training. This is particularly true of the professions where especially to-day "the more one knows, the more one knows the little one knows". By continuing education for the professions is meant, the continuing updating, extension and improvement of the considerable body of theoretical and practical knowledge which is required to-day by most, if not all, of those who wish to play a full part in the practice of any of the professions.[1] The objective of such education/ training throughout one's professional life is not merely to correct outdated information and impart new skills, but also to help professionals apply knowledge and skills they already had or once knew.

Preservice education/training and formal examinations as a pre-requisite for entry to the professions is only over one hundred years old. It does little to ensure that relevant competences are preserved or acquired during one's professional career. Many professions are concerned for the reputation and livelihood of their members and various approaches have been adopted in an attempt to ensure that reasonable updating of knowledge and skills takes place.

In Britain and the United States, professions have reacted in different ways to this problem - ranging from an admonition or recommendation to engage in continuing education, to making such education or training a mandatory requirement for re-certification, re-licence or even tenure.[2] Many professions are satisfied with informal attempts by the individual to keep up to date, e.g. architects and barristers; others require attendance periodically at formal courses of inservice education or training, e.g. accountants, surveyors, doctors, teachers.[3] Inservice Education and Training (INSET), i.e. activities designed exclusively or primarily to improve and extend the professional capabilities of any group, is by far the most common method used to ensure continuing education for the professions.

INSET FOR TEACHERS

Teaching, as a profession, is no different from other professions today in that its members need to update their knowledge and skills if they are to fulfil their roles adequately. Apart from the general reasons for Inservice Education and Training today, many major task areas, which confront education today, emphasise the urgency of INSET for teachers. These include:

i) The curricular problems associated with the extension of compulsory schooling, especially the needs of the 13 - 16 age group;

ii) The needs of special school populations, such as immigrant groups, multi-ethnic communities and disadvantaged communities (rural, inner-city, etc.);

iii) The needs associated with particular subjects and with special student groups;

iv) The new demands on teachers caused by the radically changing nature of school-community relationships, e.g. relations between education and working life and renewed demands for accountability related to educational standards and assessments;

v) The curricular and organisational consequences of declining enrolments;

vi) The urgent need to provide for management skills.[4]

The definition of INSET for teachers given in the James Report[5] and adopted by the Committee on Inservice Education for teachers in Ireland[6] is adequate for the purposes of this paper, i.e. "the whole range of activities by which teachers can extend their personal education, develop their professional competence and improve their understanding of educational principles and techniques". Although the distinction between the objectives mentioned in the above definition, i.e. personal education, the development of professional competence and the improvement of their understanding of educational principles and techniques, is slightly blurred, nevertheless the definition encapsulates the main thrusts of many INSET programmes for teachers. However, in the historical development of INSET in countries such as Britain, U.S.A. and France, emphasis has been placed on one or another of these objectives at different periods in time.[7]

In the early stages of its development, INSET normally took the form of courses attended by teachers at centres outside of the school (course-based). The failure of this approach to influence school practice in a significant way gave rise to a format of INSET which was based on the school and its needs (school-based). Further reservations concerning school-based INSET, because of its emphasis on the teacher as an employee of the school, rather than as a professional person, gave rise to school-focussed INSET, which was an attempt to combine the advantages and minimize the disadvantages of course-based and school-based INSET.[8,9] Perry[10] defined school-focussed INSET as "all the strategies employed by trainers and teachers in partnership, to direct training programmes in such a way as to meet the identified needs of a school and to raise standards of teaching and learning in the classroom".

In a major review of the literature and research findings on Inservice Education and Training for teachers, Cruickshank et al.[11] identified four major trends in the development of INSET. These were:

i) A movement from a compensatory to a complementary view of inservice education;

ii) A progression from a discrete to a continuous view of inservice teacher education;

iii) A shift from a relatively simple to a complex in-service teacher education programme;

iv) A movement from a narrow control of inservice education programmes by school administrators/universities, etc. to collaborative governance, including the clients - teachers.

The very significant issues highlighted in these trends are examined in the teachers' survey.

TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TO INSET : A SURVEY

The aim of this study was to obtain preliminary information on the concerns of teachers and on the issues confronting them in their own schools. It was intended as a school-focussed pilot-study, the findings of which might provide guidelines for a more detailed study of teachers' views on the structure, content and format of INSET programmes. The limited research available on teacher attitudes to INSET indicated that information was required on the following topics:

i) The relationship between INSET and pre-service education and training;

ii) Teachers' views as to their own needs and those of their schools;

iii) Teachers' experience of INSET;

iv) Structural and organisational aspects of INSET;

v) Some priorities for INSET.

The survey was carried out during April and May of 1985 in Counties Galway and Clare. Because of the school-focus of the survey, a random area-sampling procedure was utilised. All second-level schools in the two counties were stratified by the size of the catchment areas in which they were located. Six centres of population, representative of the range of catchment area size, i.e. from the large urban to the small rural catchment areas, were randomly chosen. All second level schools (n = 21) in each of the six sample areas were included in the survey and it was hoped that most teachers in all of the schools might respond to the questionnaire. In fact, a representative sample of 70 percent of the schools responded to the survey. However, after three visits to each of the schools in the sample areas, only 36 percent (n = 301) of the teachers responded. It was subsequently learned from some of the teachers that the length of the questionnaire (thirty-seven questions) and the open-endedness of the majority of the questions may have been off-putting for some of their colleagues.

Teachers response by type of school:

Type of school	Percent teachers responding
Secondary	62
Vocational	32
Community/Comprehensive	16

Two-thirds of the responding teachers were female and, by type of subject taught, the breakdown was as follows: liberal subjects/languages 60 percent; scientific/ vocational subjects 22 percent; other subjects 18 percent. Almost nine out of ten teachers who responded were graduates with a Higher Education in Diploma, while the remainder had qualifications such as Bachelor of Education/ Music, Diploma in Catechetics or Manual Instructor's Certificate. Almost one in five of the responding teachers was a holder of higher degrees.

As the questionnaire consisted, for the most part, of open-ended questions designed primarily to elicit information from teachers, the responses obtained were analysed using rank-order frequency distribution tables. Responses were recorded as given and frequency of mention was taken as indicative of responding teachers' priorities regarding the issues raised. Cross-tabulation of data was not deemed to be appropriate, due both to the qualitative nature of the information and the poor response rate from some schools.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1) The Place of INSET in the Total Professional Development of Teachers

Over half of the teachers surveyed (56%) suggested that their own pre-service education/training was less than adequate, due principally to its theoretical nature and the fact that much of what was covered in pre-service courses was seemingly irrelevant to the real situation in schools. Almost one-third of the teachers (31%) were left to their own devices, without help or support during their early years in teaching. For these teachers, it apparently was a case of 'learning by doing' or "by their mistakes they learned". For those who stated that support and help was forthcoming during their noviceship in teaching (69%), other teachers were the main source of help and guidance. More than 7 out of 10 of these teachers (71%) received help from other teachers, while, for almost one in five teachers (18), the school principal was expecially supportive. Suggestions made with the most frequency as to how pre-service education/training might be improved included: a less theoretical and more practical orientation (28%), more model-teaching (22%) and more classroom experience under direction (19%).

2) The Perceived Needs of Teachers and the Needs of the School

Almost two-thirds (63%) of the teachers surveyed felt that their roles had changed significantly over the years. Increased demands in the pastoral and social-work aspects of teaching (32%), greater and often conflicting expectations (29%) and a declining emphasis on discipline (16%) were the factors most frequently mentioned as contributing to such role-change.

Sources of concern mentioned most often by the teachers included: discipline-related problems (36%), apathy of pupils (26%) and irrelevance of the curriculum (20%). Within their own subject area, concerns were most frequently expressed about pupil indifference (20%), illiteracy within the subject (19%) and the teacher/pupil ratio (11%). When questioned about their concerns related to the classrooms and its functioning, the teacher/pupil ratio (27%), the lack of facilities (24%), the apathy of pupils (24%) and discipline (13%) were the most frequently mentioned factors. Lack of co-operative spirit and effort in the school (20%) was the only other factor of significance which could be added to those already mentioned, when teachers were asked about their concerns regarding the school as a whole. Factors outside of the school, mentioned most frequently as a source of concern to teachers, included: the lack of teacher/parent contact (20%), the disillusionment of students regarding employment (10%) and the pressures - often conflicting - from parents, employers, etc. (9%). The principal sources of stress for teachers included: discipline-related problems (31%), pupil apathy (26%), correction of home-work (24%), the teacher/pupil ratio (22%) and mixed ability classes (10%). Suggestions made most frequently by teachers as to how stresses and demands related to teaching might be reduced included: the improvement of the teacher/pupil ratio (29%), provision of better facilities and teacher-aids within the school (13%), making the syllabus more relevant (11), ensuring a better back-up from principals and parents (12%) and the setting-up of an effective code of discipline (11%).

3) Teachers' Experience of INSET

Almost nine out of ten teachers questioned had participated in some form of INSET over the previous four years. More than half (56%) stated that they participated in order to keep in touch with developments in their fields of interest, while almost three in ten (29%) did so in order to improve their teaching skills. Almost four out of five teachers (79%) found the experience valuable. Those who expressed some reservations about the INSET courses which they had attended (21%), gave as their reasons: the theoretical nature of the courses; the non-applicability to the classroom situation of items discussed; and the brevity of many courses. Those who had not participated in INSET over the previous four years (12%), gave us their reasons for non-attendance: the non-relevance of courses offered (31%); unsuitable time-scheduling of courses (27%); and cost factors (19%). Sources of payment for the courses were divided almost evenly into three and were as follows: self-funded by the teacher; some subsidy available and courses were funded by the school; and some outside source.

Only six out of ten teachers (61%) stated that some provision for attendance at INSET existed in their schools. to say that attendance at INSET was facilitated by schools would not be true. Some teachers (17%) stated that the school was generally supportive of such participation, while a similar proportion (15%) received some financial support for attendance. However, the fact that for 90 percent of the teachers, 'time off' to attend INSET was not available, speaks for itself in the context of the status of INSET within most schools.

Only a very small proportion (4%) of the teachers questioned stated that they would not be interested in future participation in INSET. Two main reasons given for this: the cost of courses and the theoretical bias of such courses. Barriers to participation in INSET were, in order of frequency of mention: the pressure of school-work (38%); the cost to the teacher (31%); lack of facilitating structures, e.g. inadequate substitution arrangements (20%); and the apathy of teachers (15). When questioned about the value of INSET on a 5-point scale from 'indispensable' to 'no value' the teachers responded thus: indispensable (28%), of great value (37%), of some value (31%), of limited value (4%) and of no value (0%).

4) Structural and Organisational Aspects of INSET

The findings indicate an almost equal division between those teachers who think that attendance at some INSET courses should be mandatory (48%) and those who consider that attendance should be voluntary (52%). Those who maintain that attendance at some INSET activities should be obligatory for teachers gave as the main reasons: that skills and knowledge will otherwise become outdated (26%); that attendance should be a requirement for professional advancement (20%); to provide a source of renewed motivation for teachers (16%); and that participation cannot be ensured otherwise (5%). The reasons for stating that INSET must be a voluntary activity by teachers include: the preservation of the freedom of the teacher (41%); teachers must decide if the course is relevant to them (16%); the prohibitive costs involved for many teachers (12%); and the fact that obligation ought not to be imposed until a facilitating structure for attendance is set up in each school (10%).

Approximately three out of every four teachers questioned (74%) felt that secondment ought to be available for INSET activities. The main reasons given for this included: the facilitation of participation (40%); that it was in the interests of teachers, pupils and the school (20%); and to ensure that other teachers were not overburdened (13%). Those who believe that teachers should not be seconded to INSET activities had as their main reasons for this attitude: the possible reduction in individual freedom (37%); the double work-load for many, in the absence of adequate substitutional arrangements (36%); and their experience that substitutes, if provided, are not always satisfactory (15%).

Even though the traditional agencies, such as the Department of Education, teachers organisations, colleges of education, universities and Regional Technical Colleges were most frequently mentioned as the ideal providers of INSET activities, the teacher's own role in all aspects of INSET was emphasised. Almost two-thirds of the teachers (61%) stressed the need for teacher participation in deciding the content and format of such courses, and more than half of the teachers (53%) highlighted the role of the teacher in needs-assessment which should form the basis of INSET provision.

Teacher reactions to the timing of INSET programmes were very varied. However, a majority (58%) favoured some leave of absence during school hours or regular periods of longer leave, being made available. A venue other than the school was the choice of location for INSET activities by three out of five teachers questioned. The reasons given for a venue other than the school included: a better learning atmosphere (34%); less likely to be parochial (17%); and better facilities available (16%). Those who favoured the location of INSET courses within the school (40%) mentioned accessibility and convenience (48%) and the need to ensure a school-focus for INSET activities (45%) as the main reasons for their choice. Almost seven out of ten teachers questioned (68%) felt that the Department of Education should pay all the costs of INSET, while the remainder favoured some subsidisation.

More than two-thirds of the teachers (68%) questioned favoured the accreditation of INSET courses. The reasons given for this view included: the enhancement of the professional status of the teacher (59%) and the provision of incentives to participation (29%). Those not in favour of accreditation (32%) considered INSET to be an integral part of professional development (64%), that an external reward was unnecessary (24%), or that accreditation was of no real benefit (12%).

5) Some Priorities for INSET

Teachers were asked to list, in order of priority, the following objectives of INSET:

To improve the performance of the school;
To improve the performance of the individual teacher;
To aid the career development of the teacher.

The results obtained were as follows:

	RATING		
	1st	2nd	3rd
To improve the performance of the individual teacher	87%	11%	2%
To improve the performance of the school	13%	75%	12%
To aid career development	4%	16%	80%

In other words, almost 9 out of 10 teachers (87%) interviewed, placed the improvement of individual teacher performance as their priority for INSET objectives. Three out of four teachers considered the improved performance of the school as the second most important objective, while 80 percent of teachers considered career development to be third in their list of priorities. Whether teachers made a very fine distinction between the performance of the individual teacher and the performance of the school is not easily answered. What is significant, perhaps, is that the career development of the teacher was placed as the lowest priority among the objectives stated.

SOME IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this pilot study indicate areas for further investigation in any follow-up school-focussed investigation of INSET. The results also provide some guidelines as to the structure, content and format of future INSET programmes. Although the survey was representative of the various categories of schools in Galway and Clare, the limited response rate from teachers (36%) demands that any conclusions drawn up be interpreted with caution.

1) INSET as an Integral Part of the Total Professional Development of Teachers

The reservations expressed by more than half of the teachers surveyed concerning their pre-service education and training suggest that INSET has, in some cases at at least, a remedial role to play. In the absence of an induction teaching year and adequate supervision and guidance being provided by experienced teachers during the initial years in the profession, INSET programmes might be organised for young teachers which would enable them to relate theory to classroom practice more effectively. In general, however, INSET programmes should emphasise the developmental rather than the deficiency aspects of professionalism. The significant role changes perceived by almost two out of three of the teachers surveyed imply that management and pastoral skills are more necessary for teachers today than ever before. Indeed, many of the major sources of concern for teachers, namely discipline, pupil apathy and the teacher-pupil ratio, are not directly related to the major traditional role of the teacher as knowledge transmitter but to areas of human management. The continuing requirement to update knowledge and skills is recognised by many teachers as indispensable not only for professional advancement but for survival as well. These findings re-echo the sentiments of the Interim Report of CERI[12] which outlines the most urgent reasons why INSET to-day must be a continuing and integral process for the teaching profession. The Report on Inservice Education in Ireland likewise states that "the initial training of teachers provides a foundation rather than a completed structure on which a strong edifice will subsequently be based"[13] and further recommends that "lifelong learning should be seen as the master principle for the future renewal of the teaching profession in Ireland".[14]

2) INSET and the Perceived Needs of Teachers

According to the I.L.O.,[15] job-related stress is a steadily growing problem among teachers. Sources of concern and stress for teachers mentioned most frequently in the survey, namely: discipline, pupil apathy and the teacher/pupil ratio, indicate very clearly the need for teachers today to up-date their knowledge and skills at regular intervals if they are to continue to offer a professional service against a backdrop of increasing accountability, the obsolescence of knowledge and a society which, more than ever before, expects more and more of its educational system. Admittedly many of the issues raised by teachers in this survey are not within the power of teachers or of schools to remedy. However, INSET could make a major contribution towards the reduction of these sources of stress and concern for teachers by providing the structure whereby up-to-date knowledge, skills and expertise on, not only subject-based developments, but also on discipline-related issues, classroom management and curriculum relevance and pressures, can be made available to teachers. Especially in areas where there is not easy access to a Teachers' Centre, INSET programmes could provide a very valuable and necessary forum for teachers to share their experiences and to bring their combined talent and expertise to bear on such issues.

3) Teachers' Experience of and Attitude Towards INSET

Teacher motivation and goodwill towards INSET is evidenced by the fact that almost 90 percent of teachers surveyed had participated in such courses over the previous four years. More than half of the respondents regarded participation in INSET as indispensable for professional development, with only one-third regarding participation to be of "some value". In spite of many barriers to participation, such as "the pressure of school-work", the cost to the teacher and the virtual absence of a facilitating structure (no time off school was available to 90 percent of responding teachers for participation in courses), almost two-thirds of teachers surveyed attended INSET courses "to keep up with developments in their fields of interest" and the remainder participated "in order to improve teaching skills". Dissatisfaction with courses attended was recorded by one in five teachers, due mainly to the theoretical nature of the courses attended and the non-applicability to the classroom situation of topics covered. The finding reinforces the recommendations of the Report on Inservice Education[16] regarding the facilitation of INSET and the need to ensure that courses are practical and applicable to the teaching situation.

4) Structural and Organisational Aspects of INSET

Although responding teachers were divided in their views as to whether attendance at INSET should be voluntary or mandatory, international trends indicate a growing demand for mandatory attendance.[17] Changes within the school and in society generally, coupled with increased roles for the teacher would seem to imply that the continuing up-dating of knowledge and skills is absolutely necessary, not only for the development of teaching, but for the very survival of teaching as a profession.

Three out of four teachers questioned stated that secondment ought to be available for participation in INSET. Such facilitation is in the interests of teachers, pupils and schools and is a necessary condition, if any mandatory attendance is prescribed. Even where some form of secondment is available, more than a third of the teachers surveyed were concerned that adequate substitutional arrangements were not being made, which sometimes resulted in a double workload for colleagues and some neglect of pupils.

Teacher participation in decisions regarding the format and content of INSET activities was emphasised by two-thirds of the respondents. Needs-assessment is a proper role for teachers themselves, rather than such investigation being undertaken by outside 'experts' according to over half of the respondents. The traditional role of universities, colleges of education and other third-level colleges is not being questioned by the respondents. All that is suggested by the survey is that more initiatives be taken by schools and by teachers in the design and content of INSET programmes. This is in line with the thinking behind the D.E.S. Report which states:

> With individual schools there is much stocktaking which many staff could do for themselves, in evaluating their own policies and practices, in identifying priorities for future development and in deciding where a start can be made, according to the school's circumstances and present stage of growth. Although they start from different baselines, most schools have distinctive strengths on which to build. 18

Although the majority of responding trachers favoured a venue outside of the school for INSET programmes, one of the major reasons given by 40 percent of the teachers who favoured the school itself as the venue is especially significant, namely, the need to ensure a school focus for any INSET programme. These findings re-echo those of Fullan (1980) which specify the following conditions as indispensable for effective INSET:

> the participation of teachers in the identification of objectives and in choosing and planning inservice activities; the programme focus must be practical and class/school specific; the use of teachers themselves as resource people; that direct follow-ups and support be provided to ensure the application of what is learned.[19]

Ensuring the transferability to the classroom situation of knowledge and skills learned on INSET programmes was one of the principal concerns for the majority of teachers in the survey.

To facilitate participation in INSET, support in the form of finance for participating teachers and adequate staffing for the school is required. The Report on Inservice Education recognises this need, when it recommends, "that the Department of Education, after consultation with teacher associations and the providing bodies, should set up the organisational and financial framework that will enable all teachers to avail themselves of a certain minimum range of inservice activities".[20]

5) Some Priorities for INSET

In the design of INSET programmes, the achievement of a balance between the needs of the teacher as an employee in the system and the needs of the teacher as a person has been difficult.[21] The improved performance of the individual teacher was stated by over 80 percent of respondents in the survey to be the primary objective of INSET programmes. Positing the improvement of teacher performance as the primary objective of INSET programmes would seem to imply that teachers view themselves primarily as subject specialists and only to a lesser degree as part of a team contributing to the overall development of youth. The conception of the teachers in the survey of the differences between the performance of the individual teacher and the performance of the school as a whole, would form an interesting topic for enquiry as a follow-up study. If INSET courses were accredited and portability and accumulation of credits were available toward higher degrees, possibly more than 4 percent of the teachers surveyed would consider career development to be the primary objective of INSET.

Guidelines for INSET which have emerged from this limited survey

i) INSET must be reviewed as part of the continuing of the professional development of teachers, where pre-service education is merely the foundation;

ii) INSET courses, as well as being subject-based, must place increasing emphasis on dealing with the major problems confronting teachers today, i.e. discipline, pupil apathy and curriculum pressures;

iii) The demand for INSET is likely to be reduced unless participation is facilitated both for the teacher and the school;

iv) Teachers must be given an increased role in the planning, organisation and implementation of INSET programmes;

v) INSET should contain a "judicious balance" between the current needs of the system or the school on the one hand and the professional aspiration of the individual teacher on the other.

In conclusion, it is to be stated that, until the Department of Education, schools and teachers themselves are convinced that developmental activities for staff are not a luxury or an unwelcome addendum to an already overcrowded programme, INSET will continue to play a marginal role, instead of being recognised as an integral part of the function of teaching.

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THE INTERFACE BETWEEN EDUCATION AND TRAINING : THE CASE FOR COHERENCE

Kevin Williams and Gerry McNamara

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the relationship between education and youth-training services has become the focus of increasing controversy. With the increase in youth unemployment, a series of initiatives in both the educational system and the manpower training areas has been undertaken with a view to eliminating perceived shortcomings in the preparation of young people for work. Unfortunately, these initiatives have not been governed by any overall strategy and the interface between the education and training system is now characterised by lack of co-ordination, and a degree of overlap and duplication, with consequent dissipation of effort and resources. This paper examines the areas of overlap between school and the training agencies and an institutional curricular framework is elaborated which might serve to introduce coherence into this area. We consider such matters as the nature and duration of the courses provided by the schools and other agencies, the composition of the student groups served by each and the respective effectiveness of the different courses in leading to employment. Finally, an attempt is made to assess the value of research studies on the effectiveness of different kinds of intervention and further research priorities are identified.

In the manpower field, the youth employment crisis has been met by a series of programmes based on various combinations of training, temporary employment, work experience and general education. These programmes are delivered by a range of agencies such as AnCO, CERT, NMS, ACOT, and by various voluntary groups in co-operation with the Youth Employment Agency. Quite separately in the education field, the Department of Education, in response to various council resolutions, has designed and implemented a one-year Vocational Training and Vocational Programme which is at present being pursued by about 20,000 students throughout the entire second-level system. The extension of this programme to two years and the introduction of a national system of certification is currently being planned. While all interventions designed to improve the prospects of unemployed school leavers are welcome, it has become clear that great attention must be paid to defining the role of school-based vocational preparation courses. To prevent overlap and duplication, limits must also be set to the involvement of training agencies in non-specific skill training or "social training".

In the European Community, an 'action programme' has been funding research into new approaches to the education/training interface.[1] It is significant that these pilot projects have tended to strengthen the view that school is the appropriate arena in which the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught and general education is provided, while more specialised vocational skills are best left to training agencies. This is based primarily on the perception that employers value general education skills such as literacy and numeracy and 'generalisable' manipulative skills as much or more than skills related to specific jobs; and also because school is by far the most cost effective method of providing these services. Therefore, in several Community countries, the trend is towards the introduction of school-based foundation courses of one or two years, which emphasise general education and training. Such courses are not too "skill specific in content and are designed not only to prepare students for entry to the world of work but also to facilitate progression to more advanced forms of skills training".[2] Thus, school-based vocational preparation and specific skill training are envisaged as complementary parts of a coherent process with the former provided through the schools, and the latter the responsibility of the training agencies.

In Ireland, this clarification and definition are not taking place and, in fact, the overlap and duplication of services are increasing. For example, the NESC report for 1985 expresses concern at the fact that the "social", i.e. non-skill element in AnCO training programmes has become very substantial. The report recommends that this trend should be reviewed in order that AnCO should fulfil its primary function, by providing training in those skills which the economy requires. The same report also expresses reservations at the addition by the Youth Employment Agency of a general educative component to the Work Experience Programme.[3] Conversely, this year school-based vocational preparation programmes are seeing some 20,000 work experience places for pupils and the proposed second year of this programme, as now envisaged, will lay considerable emphasis on skill specific training. This raises fundamental questions about the relationship between school-based courses and other forms of youth training, and indicates the need for the development of a coherent strategy for the future.

It is imperative that an overall authority be created to co-ordinate provision at the interface between education and training. At present the Department of Education and the Department of Labour appear to be engaged in competition and conflict in this area. The suggested authority could be exercised through a cabinet sub-committee or a chief executive with the necessary power to make decisions and impose them, both upon the government department and upon other agencies with interests in the field. The following matters require urgent attention: firstly, the role of school-based vocational preparation courses in the overall scheme of youth training must be defined; secondly, the parameters within which the curricula for such courses should be developed must be established in order to avoid duplication with the training agencies; thirdly, clear policy lines must be provided to the training agencies regarding the content of their programmes and the type of students at which their courses should be aimed. Measures must be taken to ensure that those early school leavers who are at present worst served by both the schools and the training agencies, receive greater attention from both. Finally, a programme of detailed research must be initiated so that the effectiveness of both school-based and training agency courses in achieving their aims and objectives might be more clearly established.

Coherence should be brought to these areas within the framework suggested in the remainder of this paper. School-based vocational preparation should be conceived as a foundation year or years, similar to those being developed in Germany, Denmark and Belgium. The programme would consist of training of a practical and general nature, designed to improve manipulative skills. Provision for general education would emphasise functional literacy and numeracy but also include a major component of education in the practical aspects of living and an element of work experience. In order to validate the programme and convince students, employers and the community at large of its value, a system of continuous and terminal assessment with national certification would be also required. Further, in order to develop a system of training which is coherent and rationalised, training agencies, such as AnCO and CERT, should be closely involved in developing the curricula for these courses, in particular in the area of general skill training. This will enable emphasis to be put on skills which can be further developed by post-school specialised training. A school-based vocational preparation course should lead by natural progression to courses of further training with one of the training agencies and students who have completed such a course should be given priority for training places. This type of close liaison between the schools and the training agencies is already working well in the case of CERT, which provides vocational preparation courses in schools which are designed to prepare low achievers for more advanced training in the hotel and catering industry. The rationale behind this type of programme is that school-based vocational preparation should be seen as a step to further training rather than as a terminal school year. This concept should be further developed in respect of other forms of training.

The curricula for school-based vocational preparation courses should be governed by the following considerations: the emphasis should be on the general components of education and the acquisition of basic knowledge, adaptability and the flexibility for further training.

There is a danger that pressure for more skill-specific training in schools will make vocational preparation courses too narrow and too skill-specific, leading thereby to a downgrading of essential elements of general education. Such forms of specialised vocational preparation have been tried in other countries, but the rate at which specific skills can become redundant necessitated a change in policy. General education components may often be unpopular with students who want to acquire skills which they see as relevant to obtaining employment but "the accumulated wisdom of experience must prevail in the interests of the individual".[4] Consequently, school-based vocational preparation courses should not be judged in terms of the rate of job placement achieved. Their main aim should be the improvement and development of the educational and social skills of the non-academic, low-achieving, early school leavers in order, not only to increase the employability of these young people, but also to improve the quality of their lives and their ability to cope in society.

The adoption of this approach to vocational preparation would require considerable changes in the operation and policy of the youth training services. In recent years, there has been growing criticism of AnCO and the Work Experience Programme run by the National Manpower Services, based on the perception that these agencies are not catering sufficiently for the needs of the non-academic early school leaver. Breen, for example, notes some evidence of 'over selectivity' by AnCO for non-apprenticeship training courses and says that there is no doubt that the allocation of apprenticeships has been moving towards Leaving Certificate pupils. School drop-outs who leave before sitting any national examinations receive a much lower percentage of places on AnCO or WEP schemes than other school-leavers. By far the largest percentage of places is offered to post-Intermediate and post-Leaving Certificate pupils.[5] In the case of WEP, nearly two-thirds of those taking part in a scheme had Leaving Certificate, while less than ten percent had no qualifications. Breen also notes that males are given a very high proportion of AnCO and WEP places and concludes, "that there appears to be very little available for female early school leavers in the areas of training and Work Experience".[6]

An examination of one AnCO training centre brochure reveals that, of some twenty-five courses provided (not including apprenticeship courses, External Training or Community Youth Training Programmes and Community Training Workshops), only four are open to unqualified early school-leavers.[7] It is clear, therefore, that provision is inadequate for those we might call the 'hard to place', who might benefit most from training, while those who have received most of the benefits of education are also gaining greatest benefit from training facilities.

This is one of the serious consequences of the lack of coherent planning for education and training. The brief of the training agencies is to provide skills-training to equip young people to enter industry, and not to act as agents of social equality. In these circumstances, any training body will, like any employer, tend to choose the most able and best qualified applicants. However, in the interests of social justice, it would seem desirable that more training resources be devoted to redressing inequalities of educational attainment. At present, it is estimated that around 80 percent of post-Leaving students have found employment one year after completing school, while only between 50 and 55 percent of unqualified school-leavers have done so.[8] In these circumstances, we suggest that greater resources should be provided for specific training in skills that are likely to have long-term labour market value. Quotas should be established regulating the intake to the training agencies, giving priority to unqualified early school-leavers and, in particular, to those who have pursued a school-based Vocational Preparation Course. These changes would be most appropriately accommodated through the extension of the excellent Community Training Workshops which were specifically established in 1977 to cater for disadvantaged early school-leavers. At present, they offer about two thousand training places and this number could usefully be increased. The emphasis in these workshops should be primarily on skill-specific training and general and social education should be emphasised within school-based VPTP courses. However, there will always be a percentage of pupils so alienated from school that they will drop out before reaching a VTPT year and will resist all attempts to reintegrate them into the school system. This type of pupil may respond to the 'change of context' and the more relaxed atmosphere in the Community Training Workshop, and, in this case, some provision for general education should be included.[9]

Social justice demands a special effort to help the unqualified early school-leaver. A large number of studies have shown that educational attainment is crucial in determining a pupil's labour market prospects. The earlier an individual leaves school, the more likely he or she is to be still unemployed one year after leaving. N.M.S. figures show that, between 1980 and

1982, the rate of unemployment for those with the Leaving Certificate rose from 7 percent to 20 percent, while for those who had taken no national certificate examination, the corresponding figures were 21 percent to 48 percent.[10] More recent Y.E.A. figures indicate a further worsening in the position of the early school-leaver.[11] The problems of early school-leavers are most appropriately addressed through the school system. Firstly, potential early school-leavers must be identified as early as possible and resources devoted to easing non-educational factors which play the major role in causing pupils to drop out. Secondly, at the pre-compulsory stage, programmes specifically aimed at the non-academic low-achiever be provided which lead to similar post-compulsory vocational preparation courses. A system of quotas should be established to enable students who have completed VPTP courses to enter the more advanced courses provided by the training agencies. Pupils who drop out of this process at some stage and who do not go into employment should be reported by schools to the National Manpower Services. Arrangements should be made for them to pursue non-school-based courses run either by the education authorities or the training agencies.

A systematic programme of research should be undertaken in order to determine the extent to which the present educational and training programmes for the non-academic early school-leaver are proving effective. At present, most of the data available tend to be rather sketchy and, indeed, in ways can be misleading. For example, Y.E.A. figures recently published would appear to indicate that AnCO courses and W.E.P. have job placement rates of between 70 and 80 percent. However, a closer look at these figures shows that, for programmes aimed at low achievers such as those provided in Community Training

Workshops, the placement rate is much lower.[12] This lower rate of placement is not surprising since these students will be obviously much less attractive to employers than those with the Leaving Certificate. But what the figures do not really make clear is whether or not participation in such courses results in any improvement in employment prospects vis a vis those of similar educational attainment who have not taken such courses. Breen points to another example of the consequences of lack of comprehensive research and statistics and the problems that can arise as a result. He found that there is no statistically significant difference in the labour market prospects of students who had taken a post-compulsory vocational preparation course, and those who had left school after the Group or Intermediate Certificates.[13] Those who are doubtful of the value of investing considerable sums of taxpayers' money on vocational preparation are able to use these statistics to argue that such courses are a failure from an employment point of view. However, the same figures may be misleading. Given that most schools draw their VP students from the weakest Group and Intermediate Certificate classes, and that low achievement is given priority in allocating places, it would be much fairer to compare the labour market position of these pupils with that of early school drop-outs and those with very poor results in the Group or Intermediate Certificate who have not taken a VP course, rather than that of the general cohort of post-Intermediate and Group pupils. At present, school leavers who have taken no national certificate examination have a one in two chance of being unemployed one year after leaving school, while most Group and Intermediate Certificate pupils have, on average, a one in four chance of being unemployed after the same period. This, it may well be that participation in a VP programme significantly improves a non-academic low-achiever's chances of employment. Indeed, this interpretation is supported by a survey of pupils who have taken such a course in Ballyfermot Senior College.[14] The results of this survey show that the percentage of pupils still seeking a first job one year after leaving school was, for 1982, 1983 and 1984, 11 percent, 11 percent and 15 percent respectively, figures which compare favourably with national figures for post-Leaving Certificate pupils. It is clear from this that comprehensive statistics which compare course outcomes with pupils of similar educational attainments who have not participated in a programme are required, in order to estimate the value of such courses and to indicate the areas most requiring concentration of resources.

CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to explore the current confused state at the interface between education and training in Ireland. A framework is elaborated in terms of which institutional and curricular coherence might be introduced into the area. The school-based vocational preparation courses would take responsibility for general and compensatory education, together with general training in practical skills. The training agencies would concentrate on training in specific vocational skills. Low-achievers and school-refusers may require a change of institutional context such as that provided by the Community Training Workshops. The paper concludes with an identification of research priorities in the education/training field.

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TEACHERS' CENTRES IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND : THEIR CURRENT POSITION IN IN-SERVICE EDUCATION

Yvonne O'Reilly

I BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

A) Origins and Development of Teachers' Centres

Teachers' Centres in the Republic of Ireland emerged in the early 1970s. The main impetus towards their establishment was the need for formal structures of in-service education for primary teachers to facilitate the introduction of the New Primary School Curriculum in 1971. Other factors which contributed to their development included: 1) increasing demands from teachers themselves for professional support facilities; 2) a heightened perception of centre developments abroad; and 3) the ready availability of finance for the initial development of the centres. The blueprint for the establishment of centres was drawn up by a working party appointed by the Steering Committee on In-Service Training Courses for Primary Teachers (set up by the Department of Education in November 1970).[1]

According to the working party's proposals, the main functions of Teachers' Centres would be:

a) To provide a meeting place to bring teachers together for the purpose of discussing problems connected with their school work;

b) To act as a resource centre which would enable teachers to prepare and construct equipment and materials for use in their own schools and, if necessary, for distribution among schools in the locality;

c) To arrange courses on the subject of curriculum development;

d) To facilitate the display of teachers' and pupils' work and to enable publishers to hold exhibitions of school textbooks, etc.

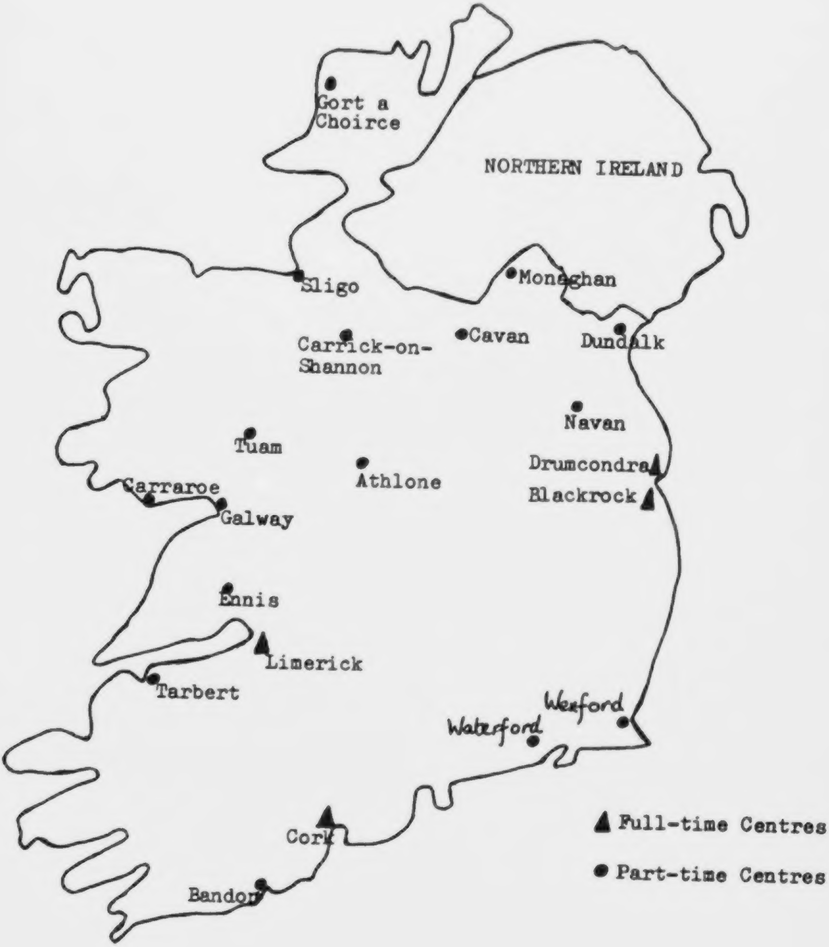
It was envisaged by the Department of Education that the centres would cater for the professional needs of both primary and post-primary teachers.

Thirteen Teachers' Centres were set up in 1972: two in Dublin and the rest at various locations around the country. The network was increased to twenty-two centres by 1979. In June 1984, Kilkenny Teachers' Centre was officially closed, bringing the current number of centres to twenty. The geographical distribution of these centres is illustrated in the map overleaf.

The map shows a two-tier pattern of Teachers' Centre provision comprised of: 1) full-time centres; and 2) part-time centres. Four centres are operated by full-time directors (seconded from the teaching profession), the remaining centres are run by part-time directors who undertake centre work outside of normal school hours.

Recently, a number of new aspiring centres have emerged in areas such as Tullamore and Dublin West. Although the Department of Education has agreed to set aside funds to subsidise courses offered by these centres it has, as yet, made no commitment to including them in the established Teachers' Centre network.

FIGURE 1 Geographical distribution of teachers' centres in the Republic of Ireland


Gort a Choirce
NORTHERN IRELAND
Sligo
Monaghan
Carrick-on-Shannon
Cavan
Dundalk
Navan
Tuam
Athlone
Drumcondra
Blackrock
Carraroe
Galway
Ennis
Limerick
Tarbert
Wexford
Waterford
Cork
Bandon
▲ Full-time Centres
● Part-time Centres

B) Rationale for the Study

Since the setting-up of Teachers' Centres in 1972, there has been an increasing emphasis on: 1) the need for improved and expanded in-service provision for teachers as part of their professional careers; and 2) the vital contribution and potential of Teachers' Centres as providers of in-service education. This pattern is reflected in educational reports and government publications including: 1) the Report on the Establishment of An Chomhairle Mhuinteoireachta;[2] 2) the Report on In-Service Education and Training of Teachers;[3] the government's White Paper on Educational Development;[4] 3) the Report of the Committee on In-Service Education;[5] and 5) the government's Programme for Action in Education 1985-87.[6]

However, despite the acknowledged support for and commitment to a strengthening of Teachers' Centres as in-service providers, it would seem, from the lack of documented material available on Teachers' Centres in this country that, in fact, little is known, generally, with regard to their current position in in-service education. With this in mind, the study reported here was carried out, in June 1984.[7] The main aims of the study were as follows:

1) To describe the current position of Teachers' Centres in the Republic of Ireland in a number of defined areas relating to their organisation, resources and activities;

2) To ascertain the views of Teachers' Centre directors regarding: a) their own position as directors; and b) the work and development of the centres.

II METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

A) Population

A national survey of Teachers' Centres in the Republic was carried out aimed at centre directors. The total population of directors (20) was included.

B) Survey Instrument

A postal questionnaire was devised in order to collect the required information. The questions were grouped under specific headings, e.g. appointment of director, finance and in-service courses. At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were invited to set down further comments and suggestions in relation to their own Teachers' Centre and/or Teachers' Centres in general. A pilot study was carried out in May 1984 involving one full-time centre in the Dublin area. As a result, a number of amendments were made.

C) Distribution and Response

Copies of the final questionnaire were distributed by post on 1st June 1984. By 30th July nineteen questionnaires were returned, giving a highly satisfactory response rate of 95 percent. Some of the outcomes obtained are described below.

III OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY

A) Organisation

The organisational dimension of Teachers' Centres was examined from three points of view: i) constitutions; ii) committees; iii) directors.

i) Constitutions : A review of centre constitutions showed that the stated aims and objectives of the centres were broadly in keeping with the functions envisaged for the centres by the working party in 1971. Only two centres specifically mentioned in-service education as an aspect of their role. Overall, no clear definition of the role of Teachers' Centres in in-service education emerged.

ii) Committees : All of the centres in the survey were run by a management committee elected on an annual basis by the members of the centre. In most cases, primary representatives were in the majority. Only two centres had representatives from other educational sectors on their committees (in one case a local primary school inspector; in the other case a College of Education lecturer).

iii) Directors : Replies to the questionnaire showed that respondents saw themselves as having a wide and varied role to play in the organisation and work of the centre. They described themselves as facilitators, innovators, co-ordinators, communicators, consultants, administrators, technicians and resource agents. Most directors emphasised the supportive nature of their work in facilitating and supporting the personal and professional development of teachers.

All respondents felt that there was a need for specialised development courses for centre directors, particularly for newly-appointed directors. The greatest emphasis in this regard was on training in communication skills in relation to: 1) identification of teachers' in-service needs; and 2) promotion of centre services and activities. Most part-time directors mentioned lack of time as a major limiting factor on their work and called for more full-time directors in Teachers' Centres. There was also a strong demand for more support staffing to aid centre directors in their work.

B) Resources

Four inter-related aspects of Teachers' Centre resources were examined: i) accommodation; ii) material resources; iii) staffing; and iv) finance.

i) Accommodation : Only two (full-time) centres were purpose-built. Most of the remaining centres (14) were located in school premises, some of which (4) were still used for school purposes. Inadequate accommodation (due to restricted space and/or shared school/centre accommodation) was mentioned by approximately one-third (6) of the respondents as a major constraint on the in-service work of their centre.

ii) Material Resources : Considerable dissimilarities between individual centres emerged with regard to existing supplies of resource equipment (e.g. photocopiers, overhead projectors and laminators). While a minority of (full-time) centres were well equipped, having all or most of the 23 items listed in the questionnaire, other centres were poorly stocked. (In one case, for example, the only items of equipment owned by the centre were a photocopier, a tape-recorder and an overhead projector.) Video and computer equipment, in particular, was in very short supply in the centres.

iii) Staffing : The vast majority of part-time centres had no support staff. Each of the full-time centres had a full-time secretary (funded by the Department of Education) and part-time secretarial assistance (subsidised through a Manpower Work Experience Programme). Two full-time centres had technical assistance. The existing staffing position of the centres was seen by most respondents (13) as a major obstacle to the development of centre in-service programmes. The greatest perceived staffing requirement was increased secretarial assistance.

iv) Finance : During the financial year covered by the survey (1983), the total government allocation to Teachers' Centres was £110,000. Department funding of individual centres ranged from approximately £9,000 to £14,000 in the case of full-time centres and £1,000 to £4,600 in the case of part-time centres. In full-time centres, teacher contributions (through sales and course fees), in general, exceeded Department-based income (in one case by as much as 30 percent). The vast majority of respondents emphasised the urgency of obtaining extra funds from the Department to meet the budgetry demands of their centres.

C) Activities

Centre acitivities were considered under three main headings: i) in-service courses; ii) participation; and iii) communications.

i) In-Service Courses : During the period 1st September 1983 to 31st August 1984, the centre (collectively) implemented a minimum of 169 in-service courses. While most of these courses were initiated by the centres themselves, some were run in conjunction with subject associations and other teacher groups. The Department of Education had little or no input in the courses offered.

These courses covered a broad spectrum of topics ranging from curriculum-based interests at both primary and post-primary level (e.g. reading skills, mathematics and business studies) to miscellaneous educational, social and cultural interests of general relevance to teachers (e.g. administration in education, local studies and photography).

Most of the courses listed required attendances at approximately 5 - 10 (two-hourly) sessions and most were conducted by teachers themselves. Only a small minority of courses (18 percent) were specifically designed for post-primary teachers. In 11 centres, none of the courses provided was post-primary oriented. In the case of three part-time centres, no courses at all were provided. The overall findings suggested that two of these centres were largely dysfunctional.

ii) Participation : The total number of course enrolments recorded (4,796) represented only 13 percent of the total population of full-time teachers in the Republic at the time of the survey (39,455). It is likely that the actual percentage of teachers participating in centre courses was considerably less than this (i.e. taking into account other elements of the teaching population such as part-time and substitute teachers as well as the probability of some teachers attending more than one course).

Factors mentioned by respondents as constraints on teacher use of centres included: 1) lack of day-release facilities; 2) travel difficulties (particularly for teachers living in rural areas; and 3) a perceived lack of interest on the part of some teachers in the in-service centres.

iii) Communications : The number of schools served by individual centres ranged from 30 to 750. All centres, with one exception, used school circulars as a means of promoting centre in-service activities. Respondents emphasised instead the need for more personal contact with teachers. The in-service needs of teachers were, for the most part, identified by means of random suggestions from committee members and other local teachers. In general, full-time directors tended to work in close co-operation with each other and maintained informal contact with other in-service providers. Most part-time centres, in contrast, tended to work in isolation.

IV DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Where relevent in the following discussion, reference is made to: 1) previous research findings relating to Teachers' Centres in the United Kingdom (U.K.); 2) recent centre developments in the Republic; and 3) the broader educational context within which centres in this country operate. The discussion focuses on four broad themes: 1) the position of centre directors; 2) in-service programmes; 3) participation; and 4) liaison structures.

A) The Position of Centre Directors

The findings reported above indicate that the general aim of centre directors is to facilitate and promote the personal and professional development of teachers. In attempting to meet this task, the vast majority of directors would seem to be considerably disadvantaged by the part-time nature of their appointment. In the U.K., in contract, most centres are run by full-time leaders or organisers.[8] The overall findings suggest that, as an essential step towards the further development of Teachers' Centres in in-service education, additional full-time directors should be appointed.

In the case of centres where the current level of activity is too low to warrant the immediate appointment of a full-time director, the Department of Education should, as an interim measure, introduce flexible time-off arrangements for part-time directors (possibly on the basis of one day off per week, instead of the two weeks block-release per term nominally available). This type of measure would facilitate part-time directors in building up a viable programme of in-service activities for teachers by allowing for a greater integration of their joint responsibilities as teachers and as centre directors.

The demanding nature of the work of centre directors clearly underlines the need for 1) careful selection procedures and 2) specialised training facilities for the job. While the question of selection procedures was not investigated in the study reported here the findings indicate that centre directors are strongly in favour of the establishment of director development courses. Some initiative in this area has already been shown by the Joint Committee of Chairmen and Directors of Teachers' Centres at a three-day seminar in October 1982 the proceedings of which were later documented as A Guide for Directors of Teachers' Centres.[9] Sustained and co-operative efforts between the Department of Education and the Joint Committee are required in order to provide on-going practical guidance and assistance to centre directors. A useful starting point would be the setting up of an advisory/information service to keep centre directors up to date on developments in all areas of first- and second-level education.

B) In-Service Programmes

While it is clear that Teachers' Centres were originally established to provide in-service education for teachers and are officially acknowledged by the Department of Education to have a continuing and vital role to play in in-service provision. The nature of their role in in-service education remains ill-defined. A recent policy document on Teachers' Centres issued by the Department of Education in June 1985 outlines the Department's current perception of the centres' role.[10] The document contains no direct reference to teacher development or in-service education as an aspect of the centres' role. Instead (in line with the position adopted by the working party fourteen years ago), it refers narrowly to the "arranging of courses on the subject of curriculum development" as a major function of the centres. The findings of the study show that the actual course contribution of the centres is considerably broader than curriculum-based interests. Centre programmes also commonly include other forms of in-service activity such as once-off lectures, conferences and seminars. The role of the centres in in-service education as seen by the Department of Education and the centres themselves requires some clarification as a preliminary step towards any future systematic planning of in-service provisions at local level.

Responsiveness to the needs of local teachers is widely held to be one of the essential characteristics of centre in-service programmes. The findings of this study indicate that current in-service programmes in the centres tend to be largely based on ascribed needs arising from random suggestions put forward by committee members and other local teachers. The complex and problematic nature of needs identification (emphasised in the literature) suggests that Teachers' Centres should adopt a more systematic approach in this regard by resorting to alternative strategies such as: 1) planned school visits by centre directors; 2) regular consultation with local school principals and Department inspectors; and 3) periodic use of carefully structured questionnaires.

In relation to course provision, evidence from this study indicates that in most Teachers' Centres the specific in-service needs of post-primary teachers tend to be overshadowed by primary or common interest concerns. This situation clearly calls for more assertive and innovative efforts on the part of centre directors and committees in attempting to diagnose and meet the particular in-service needs of post-primary teachers. Experience in the U.K. suggests that school-based and school-focused in-service education offers an effective means of expanding centre support for teachers particularly at post-primary level.

The emerging emphasis on the need for 1) reform and examinations and assessment procedures and 2) increased permeability of boundaries between subjects at post-primary level (stimulated by the deliberations of the Curriculum and Examinations Board) will inevitably give rise to a strong demand for school-based and school-focused in-service support for post-primary teachers in the coming years. There is already considerable scope for this kind of in-service provision at primary level to facilitate school staffs in devising and implementing the required 'Plean Scoile". Although Teachers' Centres evidently provide a readymade network through which expanded in-service programmes along these lines could be developed, their potential contribution in this regard would seem to be seriously limited by the current level of resources available to them.

While the total government allocation to Teachers' Centres for the current year (1986) is £171,000 - representing an increase of 16 percent on the allocation for 1985 - the government allocation to the Curriculum and Examinations Board is £400,000 - representing an increase of 78 percent on the allocation for the previous year.[11] These figures would seem to reflect a serious imbalance of government priorities between curriculum development on the one hand and in-service education on the other. Clearly, if the projected curricular reforms and innovations are to succeed at all, they must be combined with 1) greater government financial commitment to in-service provision, in general, and 2) increased Department of Education funding for Teachers' Centres as major in-service providers.

With regard to staffing, it is suggested here that as a basic requirement, all Teachers' Centres should be provided with secretarial assistance. Seconded course co-ordinators should also be appointed in selected

Teachers' Centres to assist directors in organising specialised in-service activities. As an additional measure appropriate training schemes could usefully be set up to enable more classroom teachers to gain the skills necessary to guide their own colleagues in in-service education.

C) Participation

In the Republic, in-service activities, as a general rule, take place on a voluntary basis outside of school hours and usually at the teachers own expense. In the U.K., in contrast, provision is made in most local authorities for 1) day release and block release opportunities for teachers to attend in-service activities and 2) supply teachers to replace teachers engaged in INSET. In addition, U.K. teachers normally attend (approved) in-service activities free of charge.

Such incentives towards participation in in-service education are proposed in the recently published *Report of the Committee on In-Service Education*. This report endorses the principle of teacher entitlement to release for a legally agreed minimum period of in-service education (the equivalent of one term in every five years). Proposals emanating from a conference between the Department of Education and the Joint Committee of Teachers' Centres in September 1984 suggest that, as a direct incentive towards participation in in-service activities, a system of accreditation for selected part-time courses in Teachers' Centres should be introduced.[12] Some centres in Northern Ireland (e.g. Q.U.B. and Coleraine Centres) have already begun to diversify in this direction by becoming involved in the provision of part-time B.Ed.

in-service courses. Possibilities for offering accredited part-time courses in Teachers' Centres in the Republic should be examined closely in consultation with the National Council for Educational Awards (N.C.E.A.). Other practical strategies necessary to increase participation in centre in-service activities include 1) an extension of the existing Teachers' Centre network (possibly incorporating out-centres in rural-based communities) and 2) improved communications with local schools.

D) Liaison Structures

In the Republic, in contrast to the U.K., no national or local co-ordinating bodies for in-service education exist. It is not surprising, therefore, that Teachers' Centres in this country (particularly part-time centres) tend to operate in isolation from other in-service providers. Detailed proposals for the establishment of co-ordinated machinery for in-service education, outlined in the Report of the Committee on In-Service Education, have, so far, given rise to little or no public debate between the various interests involved. In the light of the current emphasis on curriculum development at primary and post-primary level, it is now more than ever essential that these interests get together to build up a unified, coherent and progressive structure in in-service education.

V CONCLUSION

From the study reported here, three broad conclusions emerge:

Firstly, it is evident that Teachers' Centres do not form a homogeneous group. They vary considerably, particularly in relation to the level of resources available and the volume of work undertaken. Not surprisingly, the main differences occur between full-time and part-time centres.

Secondly, it would seem that, despite their dissimilarities, the centres, in general, experience to a greater or lesser extent, the same type of constraints on their in-service work. These can be summarised as: i) lack of in-service support structures; ii) inadequate resources; iii) limited communications; and iv) negative or ambivalent attitudes from some groups or individuals.

Thirdly, it is clear that, while Teachers' Centres in this country collectively make a valuable and worthwhile contribution as in-service agencies their potential in this regard remains largely unfulfilled. New and vital in-service initiatives are required in order to secure their future development in in-service education.

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SUPERVISION OF TEACHING PRACTICE : TOWARDS A RE-APPRAISAL

Máire Ui Chathain

The role of the supervisor in pre-service teacher education needs to be re-conceptualised. In the context of the Higher Diploma in Education, supervision is still too frequently conceived of by students in terms of assessment or inspection of their teaching, with the supervisor as assessor and aribter of their right to enter the teaching profession. Criticism may be levelled at a situation where, in the main, little is done by way of induction and training of supervisors for their role as guide to the neophyte teacher. Despite advances in the research, impressionistic methods of assessment of student teaching have not been eliminated and idiosyncratic and unexplicated criteria continue to be employed.[1]

While there is a general need to re-assess the supervisory mode in teacher education, it was important to conduct such a re-appraisal in the context of the Higher Diploma in Education at Maynooth. The impetus for such a review of supervisory methods emanated from the reported outcomes of a programme for the professional development of student teachers which was instituted as an integral component of the Higher Diploma course in Maynooth.[2] This programme, drawing on microteaching in a team-teaching context and interaction analysis as a means of action research in the classroom, places due emphasis on student teacher self-evaluation and self-understanding. Team planning and evaluation of lessons constitute an integral part of the microteaching model; the students are seen as agents for their own professional development. In a paper presented to E.S.A.I., 1985, it was shown that students pursuing this professional programme acquire sharpened perceptions and a heightened awareness of their teaching behaviour, leading to significantly improved teaching performance.[3] They achieve a considerable professional facility in self-evaluation.

It is apparent that such course outcomes have important implications for the traditional mode of supervision of teaching practice. It was found that students who had pursued the professional programme in college faced a dilemma in post-lesson supervisory conference during teaching practice. In contrast to their ongoing experience in the programme, where the onus of evaluation of teaching rested with the students themselves, they now were confronted by the traditional model of a supervisor-dominated conference and its attendant concern with merely "telling" them the shortcomings of their teaching - a "direct" supervisory style.[4] The conflict between a direct "telling" style of supervision and the aims of encouraging self-evaluation and autonomy in students, is apparent. The potential of the model for intensifying student teacher learning was not fully realised. In view of these realities, it became clear that supervisor induction and development was imperative in order to help supervisors understand more clearly the aims and nature of their work in relation to the students' programme in college and to clarify the roles believed to be important in effective supervision.

The Nature of Supervision

In the endeavour to clarify supervisory aims and roles and to ensure congruent perceptions of supervisory behaviour, the writer was significantly influenced by the following factors: a) her experience with the research, development and operation of the tutor and peer group analysis in microteaching; b) experience as supervisor of teaching practice for many years; and c) the research literature. Experience with the peer group analysis in microteaching had established that early dominance and too obvious direction by the supervisor or tutor could seriously impede frank discussion and participation by the student teachers and thereby restrict learning. It has been found that once the appropriate ethos has been achieved, student teachers can isolate the strengths and weaknesses in the videotaped lessons and recommend alternative strategies with a minimum of guidance from the tutors. The tutor's role in the peer group analysis is that of catalyst and guide, encouraging self-criticism and peer evaluation, while at the same time ensuring a balanced analysis where both strengths and weaknesses of the teaching are analysed and alternative strategies determined.

The writer's experience as supervisor of teaching practice had clearly established the importance of effective interpersonal relationships and clear communication between both parties in the supervisory process.

The literature on supervision indicated a way forward. In this context, the work of Stones'[5] treating of a pedagogical and counselling approach to supervision, that of Turney,[6] and the research on the now relatively highly structured model of clinical supervision developed at

Harvard,[7] all contributed to the writer's thinking. The study by Blumberg[8] on direct and indirect supervisory approaches was of immediate interest.

From a review of the literature and drawing on the experience indicated, the writer was led to conclude that some of the current problems with supervision stem from a failure to recognise, in practice, the complexity of supervision and the dual aspects of the supervisory role: the one concerned with guidance and the other with assessment. As noted earlier, perceptions held by student teachers would indicate that an imbalance is created all too frequently by an undue emphasis on the assessment aspect of the role. The writer identified, however, that the real problem emanates from a potential inherent conflict between the guidance or helping nature of supervision and the judgemental or evaluatory aspect. Role conflict in supervision is discussed in the literature.[9] On examination of the contributory causes of role conflict, it appeared that a lack of real understanding of the supervisory functions within guidance and assessment was a primary factor. Furthermore, structures to facilitate communication between supervisor and student were often lacking. With a view to reducing the conflict between the guidance and assessment aspect of the supervisory role and to resolving the dichotomy between the students' experience of analysis of teaching in the professional programme and during teaching practice, the writer undertook to establish the following at Maynooth:

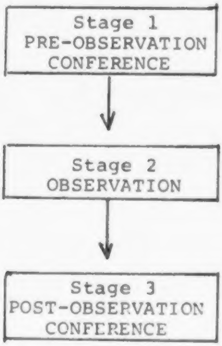
1) A model of supervision;
2) A supervisor/induction/development programme.

A discussion of the model of supervision is presented initially and an account of the supervisor development programme will ensue.

The Model of Supervision at Maynooth

Based on the needs of supervisory interaction in Maynooth, the basic model consists of three stages as represented in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 The supervision process during teaching practice


Stage 1
PRE-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE
Stage 2
OBSERVATION
Stage 3
POST-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE

A brief expose of the purpose and rationale of each stage follows. Thereafter, the supervisory roles which are employed during the various stages are considered.

Pre-Observation Conference

The pre-observation conference requires that the supervisor meets with the student for at least fifteen minutes before the lesson is due to begin. Some of the tasks of the pre-observation conference may be identified as:

a) To establish/re-establish positive relationships with the student-teacher and thereby reduce anxiety about the forthcoming lesson to be observed;

b) To achieve mutual understanding of the student's teaching goals, intentions and operational strategies for the lesson, as revealed in the student's lesson plan/notes;

c) To enable the supervisor to appraise himself/herself of the class background, ability level, behaviour and so on;

d) To enable the supervisor to understand the student teacher's frames of reference in order to develop a shared framework of meaning and understanding about teaching.

Achievement of the foregoing tasks in the pre-observation conference ensures that the supervisor has a clear understanding of the context of observation and what the student is endeavouring to achieve.

Observation

The supervisory task during observation is to ascertain how teachers' intentions and objectives are translated into action in the form of positive learning experiences for the pupils, in the reality of the classroom. The supervisor can now relate observed outcomes to what the teacher intended. The criteria on which the appraisal of the teacher is based must be analytical and objective rather that global and impressionistic and must be shared with the student. In the Maynooth context, a teaching appraisal schedule - the Maynooth Teacher

Competence Appraisal Guide (MTCAG) - is employed by all supervisors. Students also are provided with a copy of the appraisal guide and in this way the criteria on which the assessment of their teaching is based, are made explicit by them. The MTCAG is used not merely for assessment purposes but also as a basis for guidance of students' learning.

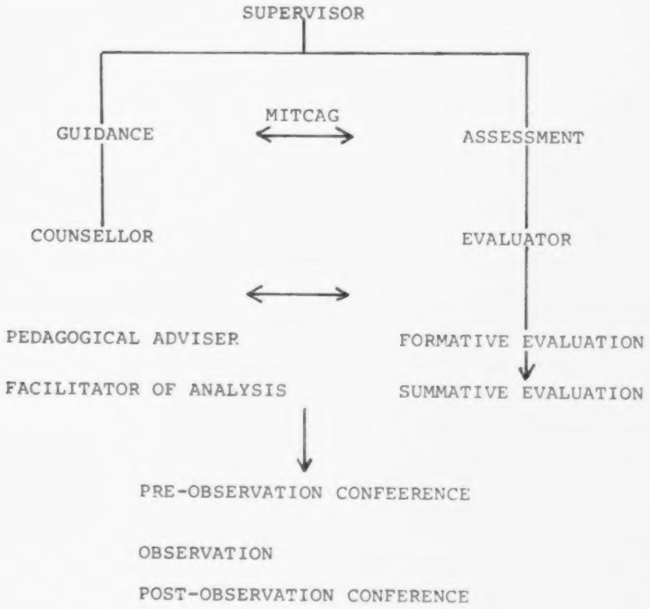
Post-Observation Conference

Recognising that even under the most favourable conditions, observation is likely to be accompanied by some feeling of anxiety, a minimum responsibility incumbent on the observer must surely be to discuss what was observed in the student's lesson. If the purpose of supervision is perceived as a process of intensifying student-teacher learning, it becomes very clear that the student must be involved and collaborative in the process. The post-lesson analysis affords such an opportunity if effectively utilised. A discussion of the supervisory roles during the post-lesson conference follows.

Major Roles of the Supervisor

The supervisory roles employed during the three stages of supervision are now considered. Figure 2 shows the dual nature of supervision where the major interrelated roles of the supervisor are delineated under both guidance and assessment. To facilitate clarity of presentation each aspect is initially treated separately; thereafter their interrelationships will be explored.

FIGURE 2   Major roles of the supervisor


SUPERVISOR
MITCAG
GUIDANCE
ASSESSMENT
COUNSELLOR
EVALUATOR
PEDAGOGICAL ADVISER
FACILITATOR OF ANALYSIS
FORMATIVE EVALUATION
SUMMATIVE EVALUATION
PRE-OBSERVATION CONFEERENCE
OBSERVATION
POST-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE

The more important supervisory roles identified in the context of guidance are those of counsellor, observer, pedagogical advisor and facilitator of analysis.   An expose of each role follows.

Counsellor   :   The role of counsellor is based on a sensitivity and concern for the student as a person with growth potential and as a developing teacher.[10] It involves the supervisor in establishing a positive interpersonal relationship with the student which should be characterised by feelings of mutual trust, understanding and respect. Key aspects of this supervisory role include *listening*, *acceptance*, *openness*, *empathy*, *clear communication*. When such a personalised climate of supervision is created, the students in the Maynooth context, who are already literate in self-evaluation, are able to contribute effectively in genuine dialogue; they will not be passive recipients of supervisors' prescriptions. The principles of the counselling role should be evident with varying degrees of emphasis during each stage in the supervision process; the role is clearly important during the pre-observation conference; it will be employed to some extent during observation, but it should predominate during the post-observation conference.

Observer : The supervisor as observer, identifies clearly the strategies that are positive and effective and should therefore be reinforced and also those teacher behaviours which are weak and need to be changed. Preparation of feedback must be sharply focused and information overload avoided.

Pedagogical advisor and facilitator of analysis : The supervisory roles of pedagogical advisor and facilitator of analysis are concerned with feedback and are especially significant during the post-observation conference with the student. Feedback can have a profound impact on student teachers' self-perceptions and behaviour and consequently the manner in which the feedback is provided is extremely important. It is only within a supervisor/student relationship characterised by mutual trust and respect that feedback can be given and accepted positively. Unless the student accepts the insights provided by the supervisor as relevant and meaningful, and acknowledges the problem as a personal and important challenge, he is unlikely to commit himself to any real or lasting change in teaching behaviour. If we accept then that the best means of changing a teacher's behaviour is to change the teacher's perception of his behaviour, it becomes clear that the supervisor must become a facilitator of teacher self-evaluation, for improvement to be realised.

The balance between the degree of help offered by the supervisor and the degree of initiative assumed by the student in the post-observation conference, is based on an identification by the supervisor of the level of autonomy at which the student is able to function. A sensitive balance between direct and indirect supervisory approaches has to be maintained. The supervisor, as facilitator of analysis, ensures equal opportunity for student contribution to the analysis and leads the student with probing questions towards a self-analysis of needs while also encouraging his/her participation in formulating strategies for improvement and assessing the results of the outcome. The Maynooth Teacher Competence Appraisal Guide (MTCAG) provides the common frame of reference and the basis for pedagogical discussion between the supervisor and the student teacher. Both the supervisor and the student together will arrive at a consensus of the areas of teaching competence which require attention and the principal strategies for the improvement of the teaching. The student then plans to work towards these mutually agreed goals.

ASSESSMENT

Evaluator Role of the Supervisor

The problem of an inherent conflict between the guidance and evaluatory aspects of supervision has been discussed. The writer holds the position, however, that this potential role conflict for the supervisor can be largely resolved *if assessment is made to subserve the task of teacher improvement*. The rationale for such an approach in the Maynooth model is conceived of in the following terms. All of the supervisory roles in the supervision process are interrelated. The counsellor role is central to the supervisor's work and underpins with varying degrees of emphasis the roles of observer, pedagogical advisor and facilitator of analysis. The latter two roles, concerned with provision of feedback, depend for their success on the effective implementation of the observer role. The evaluator role relies heavily on the consolidation of information derived from the observer role and its presentation and analysis during the post-observation conference, employing the roles of pedagogical advisor and facilitator of analysis. The evaluator role is therefore an integral part of the supervisory process and is underpinned by the principles of the counselling role. Formative diagnostic evaluation which occurs in the post-observation conference seeks to foster student growth and development as the supervisor and student together analyse the teaching performance with a view to its improvement and further development. The student arrives at/is led to a point of awareness about the reality of his/her teaching. The summative or final evaluation is made on the basis of the cumulative evidence and consolidation of information on students' teaching performance over a series of observed lessons and analysis. The complementary nature of formative and summative evaluation in supervision is reinforced by means of the MTCAG which is used not merely for assessment purposes but also as a basis for guidance of student learning. The supervisory function is seen primarily as one of teaching teachers rather than solely an evaluation of their teaching competencies.

Supervisor Induction/Development Programme at Maynooth

The supervisor induction/development programme was designed to lead supervisors towards an appreciation of the dual nature of supervision, i.e., guidance and assessment, and the interrelatedness of all the supervisory roles during the three stages of supervision. This was seen as a first step in enabling them to reduce role conflict and redress the imbalance evident in the overemphasis on the assessment aspect.

In view of the fact that supervisory personnel were part-time members of staff, it was realised that a carefully planned, highly focused and structured programme would have a better chance of success and acceptance. For this reason, it was decided that an early autumn conference with supervisors, where the purposes were explicit and the programme was carefully organised would be the most appropriate.

The first of these conferences was organised at the beginning of the academic year 1984, before supervisors were due to engage in supervision of teaching practice for that year. The format of the conference consisted of a lecture presentation on the nature of supervision and supervisory roles. The conference then provided a forum in which supervisors engaged in concrete and precise discussion about their current practice of supervision relative to the model presented and about the ways in which they interpret and give meaning to their work. This was reinforced by the fact that videotapes of lessons were shown which supervisors were asked to rate using the MTCAG. The observation and rating of videotaped lessons by all supervisors using the same instrument, provided for an exchange of ideas and experiences, and established common interpretation of criteria on the guide. Any discrepancy in rating on each item on the appraisal guide was the subject of discussion and in this way the meaning supervisors gave to each item was explored and clarified. By this means also, supervisors were led to articulate the purposes and priorities they held for their work, and in particular to confront their own prejudices or belief systems. It was found that they were very willing to explore with each other the difficulties encountered and to admit to any identified prejudice.

The annual conference for supervisors has become an ongoing feature of supervisor development in Maynooth. It serves the dual function of inducting new supervisors (if there is a change of personnel) and reviewing the supervisor's experience and competence in the key roles and skills of supervision over the previous year. The work during the conference extends the understanding of supervisory roles and skills through an evaluation of their own use of such roles and a consideration and general appraisal of the effectiveness of implementation and application of supervisory roles by their fellow supervisors. Videotapes of lessons are used each year which supervisors observe and rate using the MTCAG

In the 1985 supervisors' conference, which followed one year's experience with the supervisory roles outlined, the review and discussion proved stimulating. Supervisors freely admitted that to achieve the transition from the more dominant role of assessor and direct instructor to the more collaborative one of counsellor and facilitator of analysis, was particularly challenging. They tended to feel more secure in the direct supervisory style but stated that they are succeeding gradually in adapting to the more challenging relationship of collaboratively sharing interpretations and using the skill of guided problem-solving to enable the student to solve instructional problems. They have become more aware of the sterility of a supervisory approach of merely listing deficiencies in the students' teaching without due emphasis and acknowledgment of good directions in the teaching. It is imperative to review and reinforce the collaborative role prior to the beginning of teaching practice each year and to take cognisance of the evolving role of the students' own self-evaluation.

Despite the initial reservation about programmes which make demands on supervisors' time, it has been found in the present year that supervisors now are consciously seeking the reinforcement and guidance provided in the annual and ongoing conference. They have found that the level of discussion in teaching which is generated by the collaborative approach to the analysis of lessons requires that they are not only credible as professional teachers, but also must be able to contribute new insights as to how the students may develop their skills and strategies of teaching. They are expected by students to be resource persons who can help them to confront issues in a professional analysis of teaching, thereby enabling them to become more self-reliant in solving instructional problems. Students have achieved this professional facility in self-evaluation from their programme in college as discussed at the outset of this paper. Supervisors find that they now have to achieve a professional level of analysis, as sweeping global judgements are inappropriate to the needs of the student.

Re-conceptualising the Role of the Supervisor : Supervision as a Joint Inquiry into the Teaching Process

In harmony with the professional programme at Maynooth, the articulated focus of the supervisory programme is on a system of supervision which is modelled on a joint inquiry into the teaching process by the supervisor and student. The emphasis is on a mutuality in the relationship, with both the trainee teacher and the supervisor willing to learn from the encounter. The concept of the supervisor put forward is that of teacher, facilitator and pedagogical advisor who takes cognisance of the fact that responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of teaching must ultimately rest with the student. Students' own perceptions of their teaching behaviour constitute an important input to the post-lesson analysis because "internal mental processes (such as understanding, beliefs and values) are major underlying determinants of behaviour and of environments that people create".[11] Carew and Lightfoot[12] warn of the dangers of studying observable behaviour alone. Unless supervisors try to investigate and understand the motivation and purposes behind student behaviour and the ways in which teacher intentions are related to their overt behaviours in the classroom, they are cast in the role of an outside observer in the classroom, with all the limitations of such an approach. The danger is that the supervisor focuses on what the trainee teachers do to the exclusion of how they _think_ about teaching. The latter focus can only be achieved by a _partnership in inquiry_ into the teaching process where the supervisor engages in serious professional dialogue with the student teacher. A beginning has been made at Maynooth.

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ASPECTS OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mary Meany

This paper aims to describe, briefly, two research projects relating to music education in primary schools. The first concerns itself with levels of attainment in music literacy, common to a sample of second, fourth and sixth class pupils, while the second focusses on factors affecting the teaching of music. Each project was undertaken with a view to the compilation of a data file on music education, from the related perspectives of pupil achievement and teaching considerations.

RESEARCH INTO MUSIC LITERACY SKILLS AMONG SECOND, FOURTH AND SIXTH CLASS CHILDREN

Method

A sample of ten primary schools was drawn from the twenty-eight schools in a west of Ireland INTO branch area. These schools varied in size from two-teacher to fourteen-teacher institutions; consequently, pupils from multi-class and from single-class units were included in the sample. Seven schools were located in rural areas and the other three were situated within urban boundaries.

All the children in the second, fourth and sixth classes present on the day their school was visited were tested. In all, 105 second, 115 fourth and 121 sixth class pupils were tested. A test on music literacy was designed for each standard, with the questions based directly on the suggestions given in Curaclam na Bunscoile 2, Chapter 8, under the heading "Ear Training".[1]

Music is considered there in four bienniel programmes: the first for infants; next for first and second classes; next for second and third; and the final one for fifth and sixth standards. The top level of each group was tested in late February 1985, by which time it was expected that at least three-quarters of the two-year syllabus would have been completed.

The tests were all administered by the researcher to ensure, as far as possible, standardization of testing conditions.

Findings

The achievement patterns for the three class sets were similar. Three recurrent trends emerged:

1) Questions relating to pitch direction, identification of recurrent notes, dynamics and singing of a three-note tune were successfully completed;
2) Low levels of success were recorded when the skills tested involved naming pitch, singing intervals, reading (pitch only), reading (rhythm only), reading (pitch and rhythm combined);
3) The most erratic patterns of achievement occurred with questions on the theory of music.

Second class was able to give the rhythmic values of 𝅝 𝅗𝅥 ♩ ♫ and could place s f m rd on a three-line colour coded stave.[2] Fourth class could attribute the rhythmic values to these symbols, but could not explain time signatures. A minority of sixth-class students understood the signs for sharps, flats and naturals and a very small number were familiar with the key signatures for the major scales of C G D A E B F = (F).

Several general conclusions were drawn from all these results. It appears that of all the musical skills tested, aural skills are the most highly developed. The singing of intervals and the readong of, pitch only, and reading of pitch and rhythm combined, present immense difficulty. An intensive progamme of remediation is urgently required.

Difficulties were experienced in relation to reading rhythm. The problems were: a) barlines were ignored; b) the rhythmic value of the minim and dotted minim was not correctly interpreted. It is the opinion of the researcher that these can be easily rectified.

Further instruction is necessary on aspects of musical notation.

There are no apparent differences between the performances of children in urban or rural areas, nor between children taught in single or multi-class groups.

Many of the findings here corroborate evidence from a similar study carried out, on a nation-wide basis, by the inspectorate in the early eighties.[3] Both conclude that aural skills relating to pitch are well developed but that skills based on pitch identification are poorly developed.[4] Both studies found that "knowledge of intervals is at a very low level",[5] and that reading, where the elements of pitch and rhythm occur together, proved difficult for the great majority of students.[6]

There was a notable conflict of evidence in the case of reading rhythm, the inspectorate found "the level of attainment in reading rhythm is high";[7] the opposite was found to be the case in my research.

The remainder of this paper is addressed to research on factors which influence the teaching of music.

Research Method

The research method in this instance involved forwarding a questionnaire to all the eighty practising primary teachers working within the confines of the west of Ireland INTO branch, which had already been used to establish the sample of pupils. Forty-four replies were received.

The questionnaire sought information on:

1) Equipment available for teaching music;
2) Time devoted to teaching music;
3) Satisfaction with the current programme;
4) Satisfaction with teaching arrangements for music;
5) Teachers' qualifications and competence;
6) Enjoyment from teaching music.

Findings

The vast majority had access to some teaching aids for music, while 4.5% worked in a situation where no equipment was available. A great diversity exists in the type of equipment supplied, with cassette players, tin whistles, Listen Sing and Play Tapes, melodicas and record players, being the most common. Three schools representing sixteen teachers have a piano, and another three representing ten teachers possess an organ. Percussion instruments are in short supply, with only thirteen teachers working in a school with access to same.

Many of the respondents indicated that their schools would be devoid of equipment, but for the purchases made out of private funds. In two of the three schools equipped with organs, they were provided at a teacher's personal expense.

Others stated that inadequate funding and the lack of tradition of music were the reasons for a meagre supply of equipment. One teacher gave

> poor perception among funding bodies (Department of Education and Boards of Management) and among some teachers of the importance of music and related subjects (dance, drama, etc.)

as the explanation for the lack of resources for music in his/her school.

The majority of respondents value music resources and the teachers' own musical ability highly. Between twenty-seven and thirty-eight stated that pitched instruments, percussion instruments, record/cassette player, records/tapes for songs, ear training, listening to music and the teachers' own proficiency are either essential or helpful in the teaching of music and only a minority described one or more of these as unnecessary.

A surprise occurred where teachers were asked to indicate whether a music specialist was "essential", "unhelpful" or "unnecessary". Not a single respondent considered a specialist essential; ten thought (s)he would be helpful; while twenty-four answered "unnecessary".

(The other ten did not fill in any opinion.) This finding is in direct conflict with previous research.[9]

The following section of the questionnaire was concerned with classroom practices. The Department recommends that music be taught for one hour per week - thirty minutes for songs and vocal technique, and the other half for ear-training, reading, intervals, rhythm and creative work.[10] Most respondents felt that one hour per week was sufficient and the classroom practices bore this out with twenty-two teaching the subject for an hour, seven for less and eight for more. While, in theory, the hour per week is in accordance with the guidelines offered, the practice is different. The reality is that almost all respondents teach songs and vocal technique for the whole duration, to the consequent neglect of ear-training, intervals, rhythm, reading and creative work. Despite the obvious mismatch of theory and practice, most teachers replied that they were satisfied with teaching arrangements for music. Those who were not satisfied were proficient in music (as judged from the scope of their answers) and, consequently, their remarks demand consideration. They felt that the multi-class situation and the associated pressure of time affected satisfactory teaching arrangements. Complaints were voiced about inadequate materials, lack of inservice training and lack of support from colleagues (though some acknowledged lack of expertise was a factor here). The final difficulty, as this group interpreted the situation, is lack of confidence by teachers to attempt to teach the syllabus. Suggestion as to how the situation may be remedied were proposed. These included:

- The provision of specialist help;
- The provision of adequate inservice training;

- That most in a school became the responsibility of the most musically talented teacher who would coordinate and cooperate with his/her colleagues;
- The broadcasting of lessons;
- The employment of musicians to give instrumental training.

The next section of the questionnaire examined "teacher competence and qualifications" and produced some startling findings:

Serious gaps exist in teachers' competency and qualifications. Only 50 percent describe themselves as literate in music, while between 11.4 percent and 31.8 percent are of the opinion that their training did not equip them to teach songs, vocal technique, ear-training, intervals, rhythm, reading and creative work.

In all, thirty teachers play an instrument and described their ability with terms ranging from "abysmal" to "very good".

Twenty-seven would attend an inservice course if it were provided locally. This leaves little doubt as to teachers' perception of the need for improved musical skills.

The final issue studied is the teacher's enjoyment, or otherwise, of the music class. This last question yielded one of the most positive of all the findings of the study: thirty teachers enjoy music, while only three would welcome an opportunity to terminate their responsibility for the music education of their classes. This goodwill must be converted into musical competence for the benefit of both teacher and pupil.

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3 The survey referred to is one carried out by the inspectorate under the auspices of the Curriculum Unit. The research examined songs, intervals, aural skills and reading. Sections of the report, unpublished at the time of writing, were made available by An tUas. Padraig Mac Sitrice.

4 Department of Education, unpublished report, p. 9.

5 Ibid., p. 14.

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WHAT! MUSIC?
A CASE FOR THE INCLUSION OF MUSIC IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

Maire Caitlin O Murchadha

1

The title of this paper loses something in the written medium or as James Joyce said regarding Finnegans Wake "the words the reader sees are not the words that he will hear."[1] However, when heard, the phrase will be readily recognised by all those who have trod the same path as myself in the cause of music. Recently, when I ventured to suggest to a principal that perhaps music should be included in his school curriculum he gazed at me and then in astonishment uttered the well known phrase "What! Music?" then rising to his full height announced "Mrs. O Murchadha, my boys are not sissies." My rejoinder "neither was Beethoven" did not gain me much ground. Because of this, and many similar incidents, I started to think about the reasons why music should be included in the education of children, trying to set out an argument which would convince an educationalist rather than a musician. Some of those ideas I shall now put before you.

2

Education in its broadest sense is helping the child to know himself, or, as Pindar said, "becoming who we are."[2] In the context of school and education the school should not only assist the child to know himself, but also to understand the world to which he belongs and enable him to come to terms with it. In order, therefore, to be as competent as possible, Education and Educationalists should take account of Man and of his environment. Man has three facets, the spiritual; the intellectual and the physical. "The pupil has a personality, individuality, a self that sets him apart not only from material objects but from all other selves, all other persons ... Physically he had ancestors, spiritually he stands alone."[3]

Regardless of the aims of education it is surely self-evident that the more evenly "tuned" the whole man is the more he is advancing towards Becoming, which, according to Socrates is the essential movement of the thinking person, or, to put it as Kodaly did when speaking of music, but surely just as pertinent here when speaking of what education should be striving towards,

> For music (one could substitute, the educated man) one must have a refined ear, a refined intellect, a refined heart and a refined hand. The four should be developed simultaneously, and kept in steady balance. It is wrong for any of them to run ahead or fall behind. 4

The more "tuned" the person is the more able he will be to face life and its consequences and the more competent he will be to come to terms with his environment. To put it another way, B. S. Bloom in his *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* spoke of three domains - the cognitive, the affective, and the psychomotor. We are interested in the affective domain which Bloom defined as including "objectives which describe changes in interest, attitudes and values, and the development of appreciations and adequate adjustment."[5] Hirst and Peters say that there should also be included "an awareness of the fundamental, necessary relationships between the various kinds of objects that can be distinguished."[6] This paper hopes to show how music is so important in education, and well endowed to help in the affective domain.

We cannot but agree that more and more of our youth are unable to come to terms with themselves and their environment. Education, it would then appear, is failing in its task, as outlined above. Most young people will tell you that what they learn at school is irrelevant, as they perceive it, to life. Even the piece of paper gained at the end of the course and which most of them regard as the raison d'etre is now also failing them as it is no longer a means of procuring a job. It appears that a great deal of the education, as received in school, especially in the case of less academically able children, does not touch their lives. Would it be too extravagant to say that it is not education which today moulds the lives of most of our young people, it is not religion, it is not the family - it is pop culture, especially pop music. Pop music manipulates their thoughts and attitudes. Band Aid was a wonderful thing but what drove the young? Was it the value of the good being done or was it the power of Pop Music which achieved so much? Some may say that as long as it achieved it does not matter what drove them, I think they are wrong. There is a very important message here for educationalists. Our youth are telling us something loud and clear: formal education, as it is given in our schools today, is leaving them unfulfilled, in the affective domain they are being starved; pop music has filled the void. If we, the educationalists, could harness just a fraction of that energy and good will to the cause of education, progress would be phenomenal. What is pop music harnessing in our young people? Perhaps G.H. Bantock can help to answer the question:

> It is odd that we ignore the methods of those who have most touched the 'masses' in our times - the advertisers, the political dictators, and the purveyors of cheap art in its various forms.

> These people sell a myth, a symbol, a dream. We must seek the sources of their strength - which are affective, and we must seek to direct the powers they have unleashed into better channels. 7

What does pop music have which seems to fill their needs to such a great extent; is it exclusively a property of that type of music or is it also an element of other types of music? All music sppeals to the intellect through the senses and the emotions but in varying degrees according to the type of music. The belief that music arouses the emotions has a long history, going back as far as the Greek Philosophers. Because of it Plato demanded, for his ideal state, a strict censorship of modes and tunes lest his citizens, through listening to certain of them would indulge in demoralising emotions.[8] Rousseau, among others, believed that a musician must, before he can move others, be moved himself. "He (the musician) conveys his feelings to them and they are moved to sympathetic emotions."[9] To this day many philosophers and musicians believe that "music is an emotional catharsis, that its essence is self expression".[10] The self expression theory tries to explain the connection of music with feeling. But, if this is so, how could a composer write a work such as the "Eroica" with such changing moods even in one page. As S.K. Langer says "we can use music to work off our subjective experiences and restore our personal balance, but this is not its primary function."[11] If it were it would be impossible for an artist to express himself successively in every movement of a work, never mind a whole recital programme; "such mercurial passions would be abnormal even in the notoriously capricious race of musicians" says Langer.[12] The answer, she says, is that music "is not the cause or the cure of feeling but their logical expression."[13] It is as if the composer took the feeling, symbolised it in music and held it up for us to examine. This is very important from our point of view. It would appear that emotions revealed in music are not revealed to us that we may experience them but rather that we understand them better. Langer puts it this way "the content has been symbolised for us, and what it invites is not emotional response but insight."[14] Music, taking this premise, can present to us emotions we have or have not had, and allow us to ponder over them. Music, says Langer, "teaches one what feeling is like."[15]

Any experience we have is stored in our memory as an image. This experience-image gives one a bank on which to draw in dealing with future experiences in life. From our youngest days our reactions to events are at least coloured by these experience-images. Man is in part judged on the value he places on and the use to which he puts these experience-images. Growth in man is his ability to continually reassess his experiences. Emotion linked with experience plays a part in deciding motive which is used in judging conduct. "If," as Langer says, "music presents us with emotion we have or have not had", these musical experiences must at least colour our future emotional reactions, just as physical experiences at least colour our future experiences in life. As Bantock says "Human development proceeds in part at least out of an ability to make finer discriminations." Not only does music help us "to work off subjective experiences" but in so doing could, just as in physical experience-images, help us to make finer and finer discrimination in the affective area.

What effect, then does pop music have on the young? It manipulates them by using the most vulnerable area of man - his feelings and emotions, pop music symbolises feelings and emotions in their crudest form and it teaches them what "feeling is like" at its crudest. The appeal being at its crudest and most simple is easily understood affectively. Young people whose affective domain is being constantly nourished by crudeness must be affectively influenced by it. Speaking of the experience one is opened up to in a new work of art, Otto Baensch says, "in these experiences, what we recognise as the true significance of art becomes apparent: that it elevates the emotional content of the world to universally valid consciousness."[16] In education, as Bantock says, "it should be as important to protect them (our youth) from examples of cheap feeling as it is to guard them from examples of shoddy thinking."[17] It is interesting that in Ireland today, men are being criticised for being lacking in sensitivity, feeling and emotional response. Could I juxtapose this comment with the fact that in many boys schools in Ireland music is not taught (remember my little sissies at the beginning of the paper). In the recent Arts Council report on the provision of music education in Irish schools, called Deaf Ears, it is shown that in two counties of the twenty-six nil per cent of boys study music in the junior cycle of second level education. The next lowest total for boys is 1.9 per cent. With girls the lowest total is 11.7 per cent (see table 1).[18] Children who perceive what they learn at school as irrelevant; children who are less able; children who come from underprivileged backgrounds all tend to feelings of inadequacy which gradually increases. The dull child, says McCandless "does learn self-defeating behaviors, expectancies of failure, absolute as opposed to abstract thinking, belief in his essential unworthiness, and a perceived failure to reach a goal."[19] When this happens hostility sets in, "high-achieving groups were less hostile." Gill and Spilka.[20] These are the areas in which pop music shines. These are not only the reasons why pop music is so overwhelmingly successful but also the very reasons why we,

Table 1 In regard to Junior Cycle Music and Musicianship, the percentage of schools providing and the percentages of pupils taking it in 1983/84

County/Co Boro'	No. of schools in County/Boro'				Percentage of schools reported providing music	Percentage of all pupils reported taking music	Percentage of boys reported taking music				Percentage of girls reported taking music			
	Secondary	Vocational	Community/ Comprehensive	Total			Secondary	Vocational	Community/ Comprehensive	Total for boys	Secondary	Vocational	Community/ Comprehensive	**Total for girls**
Louth	12	5	1	18	66.7	30.6	12.7	44.9	3.2	22.7	50.0	25.1	3.6	**38.3**
Cork City	24	5	4	33	63.6	36.5	24.7	44.6	27.9	29.5	42.3	78.6	48.7	**43.8**
Dublin Co	53	15	16	84	61.9	28.4	36.4	18.0	28.5	20.4	38.3	17.2	40.0	**37.2**
Westmeath	12	5	0	17	58.8	37.2	25.9	33.1	-	28.1	50.3	31.4	-	**46.**
Dublin City	79	21	6	106	54.7	24.8	19.2	1.1	27.2	16.4	32.3	26.1	52.8	**33.**
Monaghan	8	5	0	13	53.8	41.7	54.1	13.4	-	32.9	60.9	23.5	-	**49.**
Kildare	17	9	2	28	53.7	24.8	15.4	2.6	36.2	13.4	51.1	2.6	38.4	**37.4**
Laois	11	7	0	18	50.0	29.1	40.1	0.0	-	23.7	42.3	0.0	-	**35.**
Donegal	8	9	6	23	47.8	25.4	17.5	0.0	31.0	15.5	48.2	0.0	45.5	**35.**
Tipperary	29	13	0	42	47.6	21.8	15.0	0.0	-	10.9	43.5	0.0	-	**36.**
Meath	9	8	0	17	47.1	23.9	15.1	10.4	-	12.9	44.6	21.3	-	**35.**
Cork Co	41	21	4	66	47.0	26.4	25.1	2.9	25.5	16.3	46.0	3.4	28.8	**37.**
Waterford	18	4	0	22	45.5	21.4	4.5	8.7	-	5.7	50.2	12.0	-	**43.**
Wexford	13	8	1	22	45.5	20.5	18.0	0.0	0.0	9.7	44.4	0.0	0.0	**31.**
Kerry	22	11	1	34	44.1	19.8	26.4	3.5	2.8	14.4	27.9	10.7	35.8	**25.2**
Galway	31	16	3	50	44.0	20.3	22.4	2.4	0.0	14.7	31.5	6.6	0.0	**25.7**
Sligo	9	7	0	16	43.8	25.0	12.0	8.2	-	10.6	44.4	0.6	-	**39.9**
Limerick City	11	3	2	16	43.8	23.2	15.7	0.3	23.4	13.8	35.2	4.9	31.5	**32.6**
Limerick Co	16	9	0	25	40.0	16.6	8.5	6.1	-	7.5	31.6	3.7	-	**26.4**
Kilkenny	10	8	0	18	38.9	23.2	18.4	0.0	-	10.2	47.4	0.0	-	**36.3**
Wicklow	10	8	1	19	36.8	12.8	4.6	0.0	57.4	5.7	29.0	0.3	58.1	**20.3**
Longford	6	4	1	11	36.4	21.6	16.9	0.0	0.0	6.3	46.2	0.0	0.0	**35.0**
Mayo	22	13	1	36	36.1	18.6	9.8	0.0	37.4	7.8	33.0	0.0	61.1	**29.**
Carlow	5	4	1	10	30.0	14.3	6.5	0.0	0.0	3.1	42.5	0.0	0.0	**26.**
Roscommon	9	5	0	14	28.5	16.3	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	35.9	42.1	-	**36.**
Clare	13	8	1	22	27.3	26.8	9.4	0.0	87.5	16.3	34.0	15.5	95.2	**37.**
Leitrim	4	6	1	11	27.2	8.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.3	8.0	0.0	**17.0**
Offaly	5	6	1	15	26.7	9.4	0.0	3.5	8.8	3.0	12.7	7.0	43.3	**15.6**
Cavan	4	4	2	10	20.0	6.5	5.2	0.0	0.0	1.9	28.6	0.0	0.0	**11.**
National Averages					48.3	24.6	18.0	6.1	25.3	15.2	39.0	10.3	38.0	**34.**

the educationalists, should be using music in our educational system. Pop music gives to young people a way to "work off our subjective experiences" as quoted earlier from Langer, but also gives to many of them what appears to them to be the answers to the problems brought on by the interaction of their background and abilities to school life which spreads over into life in general. Pop music demands little from them - none can fail. This improves their self esteem and they perceive themselves, and are perceived by their peers, as worthwhile. In adolescence it gives them a sense of identity which is the "central developmental task of adolescence", according to Bloom et al.[21] All these things are achieved by young people in their world in defiance of the outside, or the other world. The problem is that it only works in the herd and breaks down outside the herd, there is no social mobility. It is therefore not a solution but we can make it a solution. All music can achieve what pop music has achieved, but it must have the roots of the flower in the fertile earth of education and the head of the flower faced towards a much more secure, well adjusted, future.

4

If we accept that music has an effective role to play in the affective domain of education the question then to ask is in what way can this role be fulfilled. The subject is too vast to be dealt with in this paper but I shall mention a few points. It should be based on singing. To be effective it must be in the curriculum and be taught in every primary school as a classroom subject. There must be unity in the systematic training throughout the school life of the child. To quote again from the Arts Council report "A primary school pupil's music education is then, at best, haphazard."[22] And coming back again to boys, this time those in primary schools "it appears that in boys' primary schools and in schools with male teachers the general neglect of music education is greater."[23] To be of value this music education must have its roots in the cultural life of the country. "It is," said Kodaly, "a civic duty of every cultured musician to have a thorough knowledge of his musical mother tongue."[24] This paper has set out to discuss the role of music in the affective domain, but it is just as effective in other domains. If you remember at the beginning we spoke of music refining the ear, the intellect, the heart and the hand. In Hungary, in the system set up by Kodaly, all children receive music in their education, some more than others. It has been proved that far from hindering their academic progress, those children who attended schools with more music than the others were academically further advanced, even though they devoted less time to academic subjects.[25] Not only must the child receive a systematic training throughout his school life but the music teacher must have a thorough training in two arts - that of music and that of teaching. Again to quote Kodaly "It is much more important who the singing master of the Kisvarde is than who the director of the opera house is - a poor direct will fail."[26]

Nothing has so far been said about instrumental training. In the past too much emphasis has been placed on instrumental training, especially on the piano, to such an extent that people equate music education with piano instruction. In the educational sense instrumental training is elitist. In order to play the piano many abilities are required: a good ear, co-ordination, muscular ability and co-ordination of a high degree, intelligence (even Rousseau found learning notation difficult),[27] characteristics of perseverance and dedication, love of the task; but as well as the above, study of the piano involves the acceptance of a specific cultural leaning which, if not there, or at least if the awareness of this is not there, everything is built on sand. Not all can benefit from instrumental training, all can benefit from class music. "We must lead great masses to music. An instrumental culture can never become a culture of the masses."[28]

There is absolutely no hope of a strong and vibrant musical life in this country while there is no structured approach to music in our educational system. This is a vital, urgent and necessary requisite before there is any progress possible. What is required is food for the mind, not the odd visit to a concert hall or a recital in school. These are not fundamentals but only enrich and further the interest, the basis of which has already been laid in school.

5

In Ireland today we are becoming more and more technically and materialistically minded. Everything is being intellectualised. Even the football match on T.V. is being dissected, analysed and philosophised over. The more intellectualised we become the more abstract our society will become. As educationalists, dedicated to the good of young people, not just to getting them a job, there is danger in this situation. Children must develop as whole human beings, not as production or thinking machines. The Arts, but music in particular, must be allowed to fulfil their legitimate role in education. Especially is this lack of music in education in Ireland so very wrong, in a society whose race possesses one of the most beautiful folk musics in the world. To quote the Oxford Companion to Music:

> That the Irish are a naturally musical race is evident from the beauty of their folk music, which is abundant and varied. There are competent students of folk music, not themselves Irish, who describe it as the finest that exists.[29]

In a country, which at the moment has one of the most active traditional musics in Europe, it is vital that this is used and nourished in education now before it goes the way of others and succumbs to the strong and getting stronger forces of mass culture.

It would be very naive to suggest that technical progress is wrong, that we should remain in a vacuum, but it would also be wrong to state that technical progress is the one end only. That would not only be wrong - it would be foolish. Well adjusted people, who have a balanced development, make much better workmen, employees, better husbands, wives and children. Therefore, the spiritual side of man must be developed alongside the technical, so the war cry goes up, every computer that goes into a school must be accompanied by a music teacher.

Music has a unique role to play in the education of our young people, It can refine and educate their emotional needs in a very special way. It can hold up to them standards and values which have to do with culture and thought and cannot be transferred by teaching, but only by attitudes and example. Like the spiritual life, music, as an art, is the constant quest after perfection.

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THE TEXTBOOK CURRICULUM: THE STATUS AND ROLE OF THE TEXTBOOK IN THE TEACHING OF HISTORY AND ENGLISH AT SENIOR PRIMARY LEVEL

Anthony Motherway

The school textbook is a significant feature of Irish schooling. It characterises the life of the pupil and teacher in many subjects at primary and post-primary level.

The purpose of this paper is to exemplify some important elements in the process of curriculum development in the context of the status and role of the textbook at senior primary level.

Though the main focus of the paper will be confined to English and history at senior primary level, nevertheless, I suggest that these issues are significant at junior second level also, especially at a time of curricular review. In some cases similar approaches may be appropriate at both levels. For example, Holohan suggests that the patch study and line-of-development approaches in history teaching "might prove more relevent to the pupil's level of thinking"[1] at junior second level. These two approaches have been strongly recommended for the teaching of history at senior primary level since the introduction of the 1971 curriculum.

This curriculum stressed the importance of the individuality of each child, of group and discovery methods, and of pupil interest in learning.

A new role was envisaged f [illegible] he teacher:

> The teacher is no longer regarded as one who merely imparts information but rather as one who provides suitable learning situations and who guides and stimulates the child in his pursuit of knowledge. 2

The implications of this perspective for the role and status of the textbook were not addressed in the opening chapters which dealt with the aims, functions and structure of the curriculum.

Within specific areas of the curriculum the authors consider the implications for the textbook. Two new approaches to the teaching of history were outlined briefly. Both approaches of necessity implied a limited and reduced role for the textbook.

A new concept of history was outlined in the context of the patch study approach where pupils were expected to study comprehensively and actively a chosen period in history.

> ... history will now be a matter of reading, investigating, recording and discussion by the children. 3

The implications for the textbook were explicitly acknowledged:

> The traditional textbook will have a limited part to play in such a scheme since it lacks the essential associations with the environment and since it is hoped that the child will consult many sources and gain experience in selecting matter most suited to his research. 4

The second major approach stresses the importance of the environment and the central significance of local history. Again the curriculum clearly recognised the implications for the textbooks:

> The importance of the local environment cannot be over-stressed and it should hold a central place in the study of the historical. This implies not only the limited role and value of the traditional class textbook with its generalised approach, but also the rejection of the idea of prescribing an identical course to be taught to all children irrespective of their varying backgrounds, interests and abilities. 5

What is the status and role of the history textbook to-day, 15 years later, at senior primary level?

In a study conducted by the Curriculum Unit of the Department of Education it was found that

> Textbooks were used as the major source for lesson planning, and they tended to dominate class practice. 6

Conversely, other approaches which require the teacher to depart radically from the textbook are not adopted:

> Many teachers did not arrange trips for their pupils. In a large proportion of middle and senior standards little attention was given to local history. 7

In an investigation of current practice in the national schools of County Meath, it was concluded that

> Textbooks play an extremely influential role in the teaching of history, in 87.8 per cent of classrooms pupils each have a copy of the same textbook. 8

In practice, therefore, the history textbook is more than a teaching aid; rather it constitutes the history curriculum. The textbook provides the content; it structures and sequences this content; it provides the assignments and forms the basis of the methodology; implicitly it provides the aims.

What factors might account for the continued dominance of the textbook in a subject such as history? Though there is no objective evidence available it is important to explore this question, albeit tentatively, as it is a significant element in curriculum development.

Traditionally the textbook has played a central part in the life of the pupil. The over-dependence of teachers on poor quality textbooks in history was regarded as a major problem by inspectors during the period 1922-1971. Most teachers restricted the range of the course to the contents of what one inspector described as "meagre and arid little textbooks".[9] Instead of the oral exposition of a topic, the officially recommended approach, teachers relied largely on the reading of textbooks. One inspector described this dependence on the textbooks in the following terms: "The subject is sometimes taught as a reading lesson. The teacher makes himself a slave of the textbook".[10]

It seems Ireland may be typical, rather than unique, in this respect. Francis Fitzgerald has described in vivid terms the dominance of the history textbook in America:

> Those of us who grew up in the fifties believed in the permanence of our American-history textbooks. To us as children, these texts were the truth of things, they were American history.. Our teachers treated them with respect, and we paid them abject homage by memorizing a chapter a week. 11

Pamela Mays (1974) has described a typical history lesson in England as follows:

> In may own school days our history lesson consisted of reading round the class, a paragraph each, a chapter per lesson. To

> be caught reading on ahead on the sly was to merit being kept in. The same state of affairs exists in many schools today. 12

A departure from the dependence on the textbook as envisaged in 1971 is not merely a question of replacing a single textbook with a variety of books. It requires significant changes in classroom life, in perspectives on discipline, interest, teacher role, and classroom organisation. In fact it involves a radical form of curriculum development.

Curriculum development is an inherently slow process. It is a process dependent on a complex variety of factors. The conditions of classroom life such as class size and availability of resources are relevent. The limited role of the teacher in relation to curriculum planning and development is a major obstacle also.

Ironically, the most significant development since 1971 in publishing for history in the primary school has been the development of the history textbook. The major publishing houses issued a series of history textbooks for middle and senior standards during the early and middle 1970s. These are now being replaced, since 1983, by new series in response to the Department of Education guidelines on history and reflecting research findings on readability levels.

Can a similar pattern of curriculum development be discerned in other areas of the curriculum at senior primary level? In the second part of this paper I propose to examine the status and role of the English reading schemes at senior primary level.

Traditionally, the textbook played a central role in the teaching of English at senior primary level.[13] However, in 1971, the teacher's main function in relation to reading at senior primary level was described as follows:

> ... to bring his pupils as near as possible to a stage where they will no longer require guided, controlled reading assignments but will be able and willing to read independently, efficiently and purposefully. 14

A limited role for the reading schems, implied in these aims, is expressly stated as follows:

> Comprehension abilities may be increased through regular work on graded reading material such as is sometimes provided in the more advance books of Reading Schemes. 15

However, there is empirical evidence which suggests that the reading schemes remain a central feature of the teaching of English. In 1979, Forde, in a report which he claimed "fairly accurately reflect practices in the teaching of English"[16] in third and fifth classes in Dublin city and country where more than a quarter of the pupils attend school, concluded that:

> Textbooks still reign supreme in reading classes and in many cases only one series or set is used. 17

Apart from general obstacles to curriculum development, as outlined above in the context of the history curriculululum, the continued acceptance of the central role for the reading schemes at senior primary level may derive from the consensus view, based on objective research studies and expert opinion, that the standard of reading in primary school has been improving throughout the 1970s.

For example, Noel Ward, in an important report -

the fourth in a series of surveys of reading comprehension of eleven-year old Dublin city schoolchildren - stated:

> The findings of this survey show that an improvement has taken place in the standard of reading comprehension, as measured by a standardized test of eleven-year old Dublin schoolchildren in the five year period 1974 to 1979. 18

The Department of Education in its survey report English in the Primary School concluded that:

> The reading levels of Irish ten-year-olds have improved significantly over the last fifteen years and they are now only four months behind the reading levels of their chronological age counterparts in Britain. 19

If one accepts that these studies are a reasonably accurate reflection of pupils' reading attainment then one is forced to ask what is the explanation of this improvement?

Greaney has specifically acknowledged that:

> Surveys of reading standards need to be complemented by more basic studies of the reading process, if we are to identify causal relationships between reading attainment and the extensive range of variables which have some bearing on attainment. In particular much more needs to be known about the specific basis on which to teach the individual child. Research findings in this area are likely to be more beneficial to the teacher and administrator than large-scale surveys of reading standards. 20

Reviewing the improvement in reading attainment between 1964 and 1974 in Dublin city national schools, Patrick McGee identified "the considerable increase both in the number of basal English readers and library books within the classroom"[21] as one of five possible factors. However, he acknowledged that there was no empirical evidence to support this reasoning.

There are very few Irish-based objective studies on the value of the English reading schemes despite their central role in the school life of the pupil and the enormous investment involved - an annual investment approaching one million pounds has been estimated.[22]

In 1970, Greaney explored an alternative approach to the dependence on the traditional reader, namely an individualised approach. The author found that "the differences between the two groups were not significant.[23] However, he adds:

> The individualised group read more books and devoted more time to book-reading. The fiction they read was of a higher quality than that read by the traditional reader-group and the range of topics covered in their non-fiction was wider. [24]

Six years later the leisure-time reading activities of these groups were compared in a follow-up study. The authors concluded:

> The evidence from this study shows that effects of a particular method of reading instruction may persist over a number of years and that an approach to reading in which efforts are made to foster the book reading habit, such as an individualized approach, can have positive long-term effects. [25]

The findings appear significant in view of the Bullock Report assertion that there is an important link between voluntary reading and reading attainment:

An important question, therefore, is: to what extent do the central status and role of the English reading schemes, especially at senior primary level foster and facilitate the range and amount of voluntary reading and foster the reading habit?

Recent writings in Britain envisaged a limited role for the reading schemes. In a recent book, A Framework for Reading, the authors stated their beliefs:

> ... that involving children with real books from the beginning is the best way of developing good attitudes to reading. 27

In a section entitled 'Organizing a Reading Programme' they observe that increasingly the reading scheme should only be a part of the materials for teaching reading.

They outline four methods of organization ranging from one which is closest to the conventional reading scheme to three and four which are nearest to free choice reading.

Vera Southgate in her book, Children Who Do Read, responding to the finding that children aged 12+ read on average 2.2 books per month has stated that:

> Accordingly, it is not sufficient that teachers should concentrate on ensuring that all children can read, without also engineering situations in which children do read for their personal satisfaction for increasingly extended periods. 28

The value of the reading schemes in fostering this habit of independent reading needs to be evaluated as part of the re-appraisal of their status and role in the classroom.

There is considerable evidence, therefore, to suggest that the role of the history textbook and English reading scheme remain paramount in the life of the senior primary pupil. Any fundamental departure from the traditional textbook is more than a mere change of book or textbooks, it is a significant process of curricular development. It is abundantly clear therefore that the implementation of the 1971 curriculum in relation to the common textbook is an extremely slow process as there remains a considerable gap between the planned curriculum, as embodied in the *Teachers' Handbook of 1971*, and the implemented curriculum as reflected in classroom practice.

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TOWARDS A BROADCAST-BASED OPEN LEARNING SYSTEM

John MacMahon

The view has been emerging in adult and continuing education circles that the concept of education on which our schools, colleges and universities are based - that of education as a preparation for life or the 'front-end' model - is no longer adequate in a society which is experiencing widespread and rapid change at both the social and technological level. New concepts of education are being advanced, such as 'permanent education', 'continuing education', 'lifelong learning' which recognise that a person's educational needs do not exist merely in childhood and adolescence but continue right through one's life.[1] However, educational institutions which developed in response to the requirements of a static environment have been slow to adjust to meet the needs of adult learners.

In this country the major expansion in the provision of educational opportunities for adults has been in the provision of classes for adults through the vocational and community schools. While such courses are valuable they do not constitute a comprehensive education system for adults. There is also a growing awareness that learning can take place in environments other than educational institutions. It is evident that people who learn, or wish to learn, outside the formal institutional context require different forms of support to that which the institutions now provide.

The UNESCO report Learning to Be[2] distinguishes between prescriptive learning systems, which tend to be selective and competitive and open systems which tend to be non-selective, non-competitive and non-prescriptive. It suggests that there must be 'freedom of choice as to means and methods. These include full-time education, part-time education and education by correspondence as well as all the many forms of self-education making direct use of information sources (with or without the use of modern communications media).' Broadcasting in particular has significant potential in the development of new educational systems and structures for the education of adults.

The major characteristic of any broadcasting system is that it has the potential to reach a large group of people, regardless of education level, age, place of residence and the various other factors which influence or limit the availability of educational opportunities for those who wish to learn.

In educational terms broadcasting has already established its value within the more prescriptive structures of schools broadcasting and distance education systems. It is also effective as a stimulus and support for independent learners as recent research by R.T.E.'s Education Department has indicated. The concept of broadcast-based learning has emerged from this research.[3]

Broadcast-Based Learning

Broadcasting, as a basis for learning, has not been explored in any depth and research in this area is limited.[4] In particular little is known about how people use and learn from broadcast programmes. It is generally assumed by educational broadcasters that the task of learning is approached in a manner similar to that of the classroom. This perception of the learner has limited the effective utilisation of broadcasting since it fails to recognise that different sets of learning skills are required when learning with broadcasting. It can be argued that the learning skills acquired in the prescriptive context of the classroom are not necessarily those most suited to dealing with a wide range of readily available information. In the prescriptive educational context information is selected and presented to the learner by the teacher. Of the two distinct learning processes involved, that of selecting and organising the information and that of mastering this information, the learner is involved only in the latter.

In a society in which there is a 'wealth of information'[5] the task of education becomes one of enabling people develop in a way which will enable them to transform such information into knowledge.[6] To do so adults require the confidence in themselves to structure their own learning programmes,[7] with the assistance of professionals if desired.

Such an approach to learning has been termed 'independent' or 'self-directed' learning. It does not dispense with the teacher but rather sees the teacher as someone who is in a position to assist the learner identify his/her learning needs. This approach to learning is widespread, though largely unrecognised by the official educational institutions either in terms of support services or validation of such learning. Tough suggests it is a world-wide phenomenon[8] and indeed there now exists a considerable body of international research on the topic.[9] Little is known however, about the purpose, quality or extent of self-directed learning. Preliminary research carried out on R.T.E. programmes indicates that independent learners who use radio as a stimulus undertake subsequent activities triggered off by these broadcasts.

However, as the researcher points out: "not only is quantification difficult but it is even more difficult to assess the learning significance of any such follow-up activities.[10]

The "Monday at Nine" radio series, on which this research was carried out, is supported with "reading lists, leaflets, bibliographies and notes which suggested further reading and other follow-up activities".[11] The series itself aims to provide adults "with structured starting points for learning about literature, music, science, the social sciences, popular media, history, cultural environment etc., and to make ideas from such areas accessible as a first step to self-directed learning."[12]

A somewhat more complex support service was associated with the radio and television project Adults Learning. This project integrated R.T.E. Programmes with BBC/OU programmes and O.U. course materials (E355 Education for Adults). Access to this project was available to all and a brief study guide was available on request. Those who wished to avail of the full range of materials were required to register and pay a fee, in return for which they received the course materials and support services such as group meetings and tutorial support. The extensive nature of the print materials and the short duration of the course made it virtually impossible to study all of the materials (99 readings; four commentaries/study guides; Lifelong Learning). The participants were therefore in a position where they were obliged to make selections from the materials and integrate the various components for themselves. Research on this project indicates that "a pattern emerges which shows that the course participants organised their study path and their time so that they were able to pursue their own particular areas of interest in the detail which they desired.[13]

It also emerged that even on a course which recognised and attempted to implement the principles of self-directed learning some people found the minimal course requirements were in conflict with the underlying principles of independence. From this emerged an understanding of the learner's freedom to reject some or all of the facilities made available by the course providers.

Broadcasting, it has been found from the research provides an effective basis for developing the concept of self-directed learning. It provides the learner with optional support at a variety of levels without the imposition of any control or demands. Further development of the concept of broadcast-based learning through the provision of a range of support services would be a significant contribution to the development of adult learning opportunities.

Support Materials for Broadcast-based Learning

While broadcasting has many advantages from an educational viewpoint its ephemeral characteristic limits certain aspects of its educational application. The availability of audio and video recordings of broadcast programmes allows them to be examined and studied in a different manner and provides a useful basis for integrating the broadcasts with other material.

Most educational programmes on radio and TV are supported by some additional material. R.T.E. Radio 1 programmes such as Monday at Nine and The Future of Work are accompanied by reading lists which related reading about the issues raised in the programme. This limited support is effective and a survey of the listenership to *Monday at Nine* shows that 64 per cent spent some time on follow-up activities.[14]

This level of support, while useful, is somewhat limited and broadcasting can be supported in a more complex manner without at the same time curtailing the flexibility which it offers. R.T.E.'s recent *Adults Learning* project is an example of how broadcasting can be integrated with extensive resource meterials to facilitate further study. In this context the broadcast programmes provided a different perspective on the issues raised and also provided a focus for learning around which learning could be organised and paced. The materials were presented in such a way that they were seen to define the parameters of study rather than specify a particular path through them. This permitted each learner to identify material relevant to his/her specific needs within a particular subject area.

The support materials which can be made available may range from straightforward booklists to sophisticated collections of readings or other materials such as computer programs or other forms of computer assistance. While these may be sufficient for some learners others may require additional support survices which will proivde some level of human interaction or some form of recognition of their learning. Among these are the possibility of joining with fellow learners, either formally or informally, availing of the services of a teacher, producing some work for assessment (either self-assessment or external assessment) and possibly obtaining some form of academic credit or certification.

Support Services for Broadcast-based Learning

An opportunity to meet fellow learners and discuss some issues of mutural interest is a valuable support mechanism for broadcast-based learning and also helps to combat the sense of isolation which some people may experience. A range of options are possible for the organisation of such meetings. The availability of a Participants' Directory which lists those who wish to have their names included permits learners to make contact with each other without having to go through any formal channels. At a more structured level it is possible to arrange meetings at a variety of times - weekday evenings, weekend residential or non-residential, one-day meetings - and at either central or local venues. Such meetings, which are of course optional, can be held either at the beginning, during or after the broadcast series.

Another support service which can contribute to the development of broadcast-based learning is the availability of a 'link' person who would provide assistance and guidance, on request, to anyone who may be experiencing some difficulty. This 'tutor' would also be in a position to provide a response to any independent project carried out by the learner. While the assessment of such activity is essentially a personal issue it is possible that a learner may require some external critique of his/her work. This of course leads to the much wider issue of formal academic credit for independent study and the availability of certification.

Certification

At present adults engaged in study outside the formal education system have little or no opportunity to obtain academic recognition for their work. The National Council for Educational Awards has addressed this issue recently and has made certain proposals which are "designed to widen access for adults to courses leading to awards through the removal of educational, economic, geographic and institutional barriers."[15] While the N.C.E.A. proposals open interesting possibilities for the development of broadcast-based learning there is the likelihood of tensions arising between the more prescriptive requirements of the formal educational system and the more 'open' nature of the broadcasters' approach. The broadcasters' approach is seen as a starting point, with very little indication of where it may lead any one learner whereas in the formal educational context the end point is identified in advance and assessment is based on reaching this end point.

Consequently for broadcast-based learning an alternative approach to assessment and certification is required. For instance a Board of Assessors, which would evaluate the results of any study (e.g. project, report, paper, etc.) and allow an individual to build up credits would offer interesting possibilities for the recognition of all forms of independent learning, as well as broadcast-based learning. Many educational and practical problems would of course have to be overcome to implement such a system, but these should not be seen as a reason for not attempting innovative proposals.

Conclusion

Broadcasting, as an educational medium, has been developed in a very limited context, that of schools' broadcasting and distance education. It has not in itself been recognised as a valid educational medium, except in a very general way, because of documentary, current affairs and other informational programming. The concept of broadcast-based learning provides for the long-term development of broadcasting as an educational medium in an information society. It has the capability of reaching large numbers of learners without discrimination and of allowing them the freedom and responsibility to take control of their own learning. The formal education system can respond positively to broadcast-based learning or it can ignore it. The dangers of ignoring it are at the risk of becoming 'a post-education society' as Norman Evans warns:

> Education as the service responsible for organising formal learning systems now has the technical capacity to minister to each person's learning, if we are of a mind to make it so. If we do that we can move towards an adult society, recognising adults as learners. If we do not, we risk becoming a post-education society. 16

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